Gods fidelity,

THE

CHURCHES SAFETY:

Opened in a

SERMON

Preached before the Lord Major, Aldermen, and Common-Councel, at *Lawrence-Jury* Church, on wednesday *Septem.* 15. 1658. Being a day of Humiliation by them appointed.

By EDWARD REYNOLDS, D. D.

LONDON,

Printed by *Tho. Ratcliffe* for *George Thomason* at the Sign of the *Rose* and *Crown* in St. *Pauls* Church-yard, 1659.

(3) 398

Civil fidelity

CIVIL AND PUBLIC SAFETY

SERMON

Ampliſſimis, Præſtantiſſimis,
Conſultiſſimis Viris
D. JOANNI IRETON
Honoratiſſimo Domino Præfecto,
MAGISTRATIBUS UNIVERSIS,
TOTIQUE SENATUI
Celeberrimæ Florentiſſimæque Civitatis
LONDINENSIS,
Concionem hanc coram ipſis habitam
Ipſorumque juſſu publici Juris factam,
In Honoris & debitæ obſervantiæ
TESTIMONIUM,
D. D.

E. R.

Amplissimis, Præstantissimis,

Consultissimis Viris

DIOANNI IRETON

Honoratissimo Domino Prefecto,

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TESTIMONIUM;

D.D.

E. R.

EZRA 9. 15.

O LORD GOD *of Iſrael, thou art righteous, for we remain yet eſcaped as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our treſpaſſes, for we cannot ſtand before thee becauſe of this.*

IN the former part of this Book, we have a Narration of many great mercies of God to his people after their long and ſore captivity.

1. The Edict of *Cyrus* for return of the people, building the Temple, reſtoreing of the holy Veſſels, *Chap.* 1.

2. The purſuance of that Edict in the return of 49000 and upward, *Chap.* 2.

3. The beginning of the reſtitution of Gods worſhip, ſetting up the Altar, offering Sacrifices,

laying the Foundations of the Houſe, with Trumpets and joy, *Chap.* 3.

4. The ſpecial aſſiſtance and encouragement they received in the work by the Prophets, notwithſtanding the oppoſition of the adverſaries, *Chap.* 5. 1, 6, 14.

5. The gracious Decree of *Darius* for promoting the building, after it had been obſtructed, his Princely munificence thereunto, the command given to the Enemies to be ſerviceable to the work, the finiſhing and dedication of the Houſe, and keeping of the Paſſeover, *Chap.* 6.

6. The gracious commiſſion of *Artaxerxes* to *Ezra* for further promoting the worſhip of God at *Jeruſalem*, his indulgence to Prieſts and Levites, ordering of Magiſtrates and Judges, *Chap.* 7.

7. The expedition of *Ezra*, and divers others with this Commiſſion; The delivery of the Silver, Gold, and Veſſels which the King, his Counſellors, Lords, and all Iſrael, had offered to the houſe of the Lord into the hands of twelve ſelect men of the Prieſts: the gracious preſervation of *Ezra* and his company in their journey from the hands of thoſe that lay in wait for them, after they had ſolemnly ſought God by prayer and faſting, their ſafe arrival, delivery of the offering to the Houſe of the Lord, ſucceſs of the Commiſſion, *Cap.* 8.

Thus far things went comfortably on, and with good ſucceſs, notwithſtanding the oppoſition and obſtruction given to the work for a time by the Enemies thereof, of which we read, *Chap.* 4.

But in this ninth Chapter we meet with a farre more

more dangerous obſtruction then any had before been: an horrible ſinne committed by Prieſts, Levites, people, wherein the hands of the Princes and Rulers had been cheif, in mingling the holy ſeed in marriage with the people of thoſe Lands: contrary to an expreſs command, *Deut.* 7. 1. 3. *Thou ſhalt not make marriages with them, &c.* whereby the worſhip of God now newly reſtored, was in danger to be ſpeedily ſubverted again, *Deut.* 7. 4. *Exo.* 34. 15, 16. as we finde by the example of *Solomon*, 1 *Reg.* 11. 4, 8. Hereupon *Ezra* is affected with zeal, ſorrow, and aſtoniſhment, *ver.* 3, 4, 5. and *unto him were aſſembled every one that trembled at the word of the God of Iſrael, to humble* themſelves before God: and to *conſult* what in ſo deſperate a caſe was neceſſary to be done for diverting that wrath which they had provoked, *ver.* 3, 4. *Ezra* prepareth and compoſeth himſelf in a ſolemn manner to pray, rends his garments, falls on his knees, ſpreads forth his hands, ſtirs up his faith, takes the fitteſt ſeaſon, *the time of the Sacrifice*, when God might be minded by the blood of Attonement to recieve his prayer with favour. *ver.* 5.

Vid. *Serarium in Joſ. 6. quæſt.* 50. *Pined. de Rebus Solom. lib. 7. cap. 4. & 6*

In the Prayer we have theſe particulars.

1. His abaſement of himſelf, his ſhame, and conſternation of ſpirit, a temper eſſential to true humiliation: *I will remember my Covenant* ſaith the Lord, and *thou ſhalt remember thy ways*, and be aſhamed, *Ezek.* 16. 60, 61. and again, *you ſhall loath your ſelves in your own ſight, for all your evils that ye have committed, Ezek.* 20. 43.

Jer. 3. 5. 31. 19. *Dan.* 9. 7, 8. *Luke* 18. 13.

2. A general confeſſion of their ſinnes, and the

ὡς δ' ὅτε χεί-
μαῤῥοι ποταμοὶ
κατ' ὄρεσφι
ῥέοντες.
ἐς μισγάγκειαν συμβάλλετον ὄβριμον ὕδωρ.
Homer. Iliad. 4.

sinnes of their Fathers, as *Nehem.* 9. 34. *Dan.* 9.8. the greatnesse, the growth, the continuance of them, *Our iniquities are increased over our heads*, as *Psal.* 38.4. A Metaphor from the swelling of waters, *Psal.* 124.4,5. our Trespasses are *grown up to Heaven*, a further and stronger expression of the atrocity of them, as 2 *Chron.* 28.9.

3. An acknowledgement of the justice of God in the punishment of their iniquities, on Kings, Priests, and people, in captivity, poverty, and contempt, *ver.* 7. as *Psal.* 44. 9-14. 79. 1-4.

4. A thankful acknowledgement of restored mercies out of free and rich grace, unto a *small remnant* of distressed Bondmen whom God *had not forsaken in their Bondage*, but extended mercy unto, who were, 1. escaped out of their captivity. 2. Setled in their own land, *as a naile in a sure place*, as *Isa.* 22. 23. 3. Comforted after their darkness and sorrow, *by lightning their eyes*, who had been long in *Babylon* as in a *Dungeon*, *Zach.* 9. 11. by *reviving* and giving them a resurrection, who had lien in Captivity as *dry bones in a grave*, *Ezek.* 37. 12. 4. Aided and assisted by the special favour of the King of *Persia*, to set up the House of God, and *repair the desolations thereof*, *ver.* 9. 5. Compassed about with his protection, as with *a wall*, from the violence of Enemies, *ver.* 8,9. as *Isa.* 26. 1. *Zach.* 2. 5. by all which considerations, the greatness of their sinnes was exceedingly aggravated.

5. A particular confession of the present sin under the guilt whereof they did now lye.

Wherein are considerable. 1. A patheticall acknow-

acknowledgement that they are wholly without excuſe put to ſilence, for guilt ſtops the mouth, *Mat.*22.12. *Rom.* 3. 19. *ver.* 10.

2. A full aggravation of it by ſeverall conſiderations. 1. It was againſt a ſevere *Law* provided in that very caſe, *Deut.*7.3,4. 2. Againſt the *Equity* of that Law, the *people were unclean, abominable.* 3. Againſt the *Promiſe* annexed to the Law, *to eat the good of the Land.* 4. Againſt the *Chaſtening* hand of God which had been upon them. 5. Againſt the *Meaſure* of thoſe Chaſtiſements, they were puniſhed *leſſe then their iniquities deſerved.* 6. Againſt the great and notable *Deliverance* which God had wrought for them beyond their thoughts or hopes, *ver.* 11,12,13.

6. An implicite owning of the wrath of God, which might in this caſe juſtly conſume and make an end of them, and leave them no *remnant*, *ver.* 14.

7. An acknowledgement of Gods gracious fidelity in not conſuming them, but patiently bearing with them, and letting them *remain eſcaped*, *ver.* 15.

Laſtly, the concluſion of the Prayer, the ſame with the introduction into it, *ſhame* and *confeſſion* of guilt; *ver.* 15.

O Lord God of Iſrael] who art in *Covenant* with them, and owneſt them for thy people, *Deut.*26.18. and art *afflicted in their afflictions*, in whoſe ſufferings thy great name is concerned, in whoſe proſperity thy ſole grace is magnified. *Thou art righteous*] Juſt in thy *Judgements* in all that is come upon

on us, *Nehem*, 9.33. faithfull in thy *Covenant* in all that thou haſt ſaid unto us. And hereof thou haſt given us aſſurance, *for we remain yet eſcaped*,] According to thy promiſe, that after *ſeventy years* ſhould be accompliſhed in *Babylon*, thou wouldſt viſit thy people, and perform thy good word towards them, in cauſing them to return to their own Land again, *Jer.* 29.10. 2 *Chron.* 36.21. we have deſerved by our Provocations, to be *cut off* from being a People, but for thy Promiſe ſake we *yet remain*, for thou haſt ſaid, that the *Scepter ſhall not depart from* Judah, *nor a Law-giver from between his feet, untill* Shilo *come*, *Gen.*49.10. that *Immanuel* was to come of the houſe of *David*, before the Jews ſhould ceaſe to be a Nation, or ſhould have their politie utterly diſſolved, *Iſa.* 7.14. *Iſa.* 8.9, 10. *Iſai.* 10.24-27. We have deſerved to have been kept *Captives* in *Babylon* ſtill, but for thy Promiſe ſake we remain *yet eſcaped*, becauſe thou haſt ſaid, that thou wouldeſt cauſe us *to come up out of our graves, and bring us into the Land of Iſrael*, *Ezek.*37.12,13,14. It is *by the blood of the Covenant* alone that thon haſt *ſent forth thy priſoners out of the pit*, *Zach.*9.11.

The words are the cloſe of a Penitential Prayer, wherein there is obſervable, 1. A Comfortable addreſs to God as the *God of Iſrael*. 2. A Penitent acknowledgement of *his righteouſneſſe* in the evils which they ſuffered. 3. A grateful acknowledgement of his *fidelity* in the Mercies which they enjoyed. 4. A demonſtration of this great Mercy. 1. *We remain*, we are not conſumed. 2. We re-

remain *an eſcape*, we are not detained in captiuity. 3. *As it is this day*, not only eſcaped, but favoured, encouraged, aſſiſted, to build Gods Houſe, to reſtore his Worſhip, though to this day we have had ſo great provocations.

O Lord God of Iſrael, Thou art *righteous*, we have ſinned as a perfidious people againſt *a God in covenant*, thou haſt afflicted us in meaſure, as *a God in covenant*.

Afflictions are ſweetned, Mercies are magnified ſinnes are aggravated, ſinners are humbled and melted by no conſideration more, then by the grace of the *Covenant*, that we have to doe with a God who is pleaſed to be called ours; when he *ſmites* us, this is our Comfort, the rod is in the hand of a Father, he may viſit with ſtripes, but he *will not break his Covenant*, *Pſal.* 89. 32-34. when he loadeth us with *mercies*, this is our joy, that they are all appendices to *Chriſt*, and rayes, and Emanations of the *Covenant*, *Rom.* 8. 32. *Jer.* 32. 41. If he *hear* us, if he *anſwer* us, if he be gracious unto us, *we ſhall weep no more, though he give us bread of adverſity, and water of affliction*, *Iſai.* 30. 18-20. when we *review our ſinnes*, and ſet our ſelves ſeriouſly to turn to God, this makes us loath our ſelves, this fills our faces with ſhame, and our hearts with ſorrow, that we have done it *againſt a God in Covenant*, who is *pacified* towards us, *Ezek.* 16. 62, 63. It is great preſumption for *aliens* and *ſtrangers* to deſpiſe Gods *authority*, or abuſe his *bounty*, but for an *adopted* people, whom he hath ſelected in a peculiar manner to be his own, and *ſet apart for himſelf*, for whom he reſerveth the choiſeſt of his mercies,

cies, to whom he revealeth the ſecrets of his love, for theſe to ſinne, not only againſt *Precepts* and *Benefits*, but againſt the *Bowels* of a Father, the *blood* of a Saviour, the *grace* of a Comforter, the *Covenant* of life, the Charter of Salvation, this is that which ſhould greatly abaſe us in our own eyes, that we ſhould *thus requite a Father, Deut.* 32. 6. The Lord calls Heaven and Earth to be amazed at it, *Hear O Heaven, and give ear O Earth, for the Lord hath ſpoken, for I have nouriſhed and brought up children*, adopted them into my family, brought them into my Land, advanced them unto my favour, vouchſafed my preſence with them, ſet up my Name and glory among them, and yet *they have rebelled againſt me*, Iſa. 1. 2. *Be aſtoniſhed O ye heavens*, and be ye horribly afraid, be very deſolate, for my people who have heard my voice out of Heaven, whom I have taken from the midſt of another Nation, by temptations, by ſigns, by wonders, by war, by a mighty hand, by a ſtretched-out arm, and by great terrors, who have been the Fountain of all their bleſſings, and the glory in the midſt of them, *have changed their glory* for vanity, and their *Fountain* for *broken ciſterns*, *Jer.* 2 11, 12, 13. This is matter of great preſſure unto him, *Amos* 2. 9, 13. and ſhould much more be ſo unto us.

Many aggravations there are in the ſins of Gods people, which may greatly tend to their humbling, and abaſement. They are committed,

1. Againſt more glorious *light*, and more ſpiritual convictions, *after they have known God, and are known*

known of God, *Gal.* 4. 9. after he hath taught them his ways, & shewed his covenant, & imparted unto them the secrets of his salvation, *Ps.* 25. 9, 14. after he had *opened* their ears, and *sealed* their instruction to withdraw them from sinful purposes, *Job* 33. 16, 17. after he had caused them to hear a *word behind them*, saying, this is the way, *Isai.* 30. 21. and had *shewed them the salvation of God*, *Psal.* 50. 23. and had been as it were *transfigured* in their presence. The more the beauties of holiness are discovered to the soul, the greater is the unkindness and disingenuity of that soul, in giving entertainment to any sinful lust again.

2. Against speciall and more tender *love*, which love of Christ *passeth knowledge*, and therefore should *constrain us* to love him, that loved us, & died for us, 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. *David* had been highly honoured by God, *Solomon* was the *belaved of God*, and this made their sins both more strange, and more atrocious, 2 *Sam.* 12. 7, 8, 9. *Nehem.* 13. 26. *you only have I known of all the Families of the Earth, therefore I will punish you for your iniquities*, *Amos* 3. 2. *Jer.* 2. 21, 22.

3. Against the breathings of the *Spirit of Grace*, whose motions being *quenched*, whose operations being *resisted*, whose sweet and gracious pulsations at the door of the soul being neglected, he is exceedingly *grieved* in the hearts of his people, and provoked to withdraw himself and his Comforts from them, *Ephes.* 4. 30. *Cant.* 5. 6. and they put to cry hard for recovery of him again, whom they had by their unkind usage grieved away, and caused to hide his presence from them, *Psal.* 51. 10, 11, 12.

4. Against the *peace of God* which should *keep our hearts and mindes* in Christ, from yeilding to temptations, *Phil.* 4.7. when the Lord speaks peace to the souls of his people, and lifts up the light of his Countenance upon them, and sheds abroad the love of his Son into them, this should fortifie and garrison the heart against the assaults of sinne, the *joy of the Lord* should be the *strength* of his people, *Nehem.* 8. 10. and the more comfort they have in being acquainted with him, the more fearfull they should be of being estranged from him, the greater the *sweetnesse* of the *peace of God*, the greater the *bitternesse* of those sinnes whereby we forfeit it, and hide it from our selves.

5. Against that *spirituall wisdom and understanding*, which the Lord hath given us for this end, that we might *walk worthy of him unto all pleasing*, *Col.* 1.9, 10. True wisdom is the knowledge of the most honourable and most excellent things whereby we discern things which differ, suggesteth the supreme and most necessary ends, and the most proper and pertinent *means* conducing thereunto. Setteth a man to consider how he may live to the great uses for which he was made, is a *wisdom unto salvation*, 2 *Tim.* 3.15. makes him look to *the way of life* how he may depart from Hell, *Prov.* 15. 24. 14, 8, 15. teacheth him *to walk circumspectly*, and warily amidst the many snares and temptations which are ready to seduce and mislead him, *Eph.* 5. 15. makes him have his *eyes in his head*, *Eccle.* 2. 14. that he may understand every good path, *Prov.* 2. 9. makes him study the will of God to the end that he

ἐπι ςήμη τῶν τεμιωτάτων. *Arist.*

he may keep it, *Prov.* 28.7. puts the *heart* and the *right hand* together, *Eccle.* 10. 2. gives a ſpiritual evidence and taſte of the beauties and ſweetneſs of holineſs: ſhews it ſelf *in a good converſation*, and in doing the Commandements, *Jam.* 3.13. *Pſal.* 111. 10. It is more improper for a holy man to yeeld up himſelf unto any way or work of wickedneſs, then for a Counſellor of State, or a great Philoſopher to play with Straws or Cherry-ſtones, to give up himſelf to Boyiſh and Ludicrous vanities: and therefore holy men confeſs their ſinnes in Scripture by the name of *folly*, 2 *Sam.* 24. 10. *Pſalm* 73. 22.

6. Againſt the *hope of ſalvation*, which teacheth us *to purifie* our ſelves as Chriſt is pure, 1. *Joh.* 3. 3. our ſalvation will be to be *like unto Chriſt*, that grace which makes us ſuſpire after a likeneſs unto him in *glory*, will kindle in our hearts a deſire to be like unto him in *grace*, for grace is glory Inchoate, as glory is grace Conſummate, ſo much as we neglect *duty*, ſo much we ſhake the *hope of glory*, Lord, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *I have hoped for thy ſalvation, I have done thy commandements*, *Pſal.* 119. 166. though obedience be not a *foundation* upon which to build our hope (for our hope muſt be in Gods word, not in our own works, *Pſal.* 119. 42. 49. 74.) Yet it is a *fruit*, and conſequently an *Evidence* and argument *a poſteriori* to demonſtrate it.

The ſalvation we hope for is *to ſee God*, and hereunto is required *purity* of heart, *Matth.* 5. 8. as the object ſeen doth make its own image in the eye which ſeeth it; ſo when the ſoul *ſees* God in

glory, it is perfectly fashioned unto his *likenesse*, and therefore *without holinesse no man can see God*, *Heb.* 12. 14. So much as we blemish our *holiness*, we do obscure and sully our *hope*.

7. Against the *honour of Religion* which is thereby exceedingly wounded and reproached, 2 *Sam.* 12. 14. the Apostle frequently exhorteth us to walk *worthy of our high calling*, so as *becometh the Gospel*, that we may *adorn the doctrine* of our Lord Jesus, and *put to silence the ignorance* of foolish men, that they may be ashamed who falsly accuse our good conversation, *ut nemo de nobis male loqui sine mendacio possit*: to be tender of the *name of God* and *his Doctrine*, that these may not be blaspheмed, see *Ephes.* 4. 1. *Phil.* 1. 27. 1 *Thes.* 2. 12. *Tit.* 2. 10. 1 *Tim.* 6. 1. 2 *Cor.* 6. 3. 1 *Pet.* 2. 15. 3. 16. for though it be most illogicall and absurd to charge an holy Doctrine with the blame of those sins, which the professors thereof, contrary to the rules of their own profession, and in obedience only to their own lusts, do commit; Yet so much ignorance and malice there is in wicked men, as to blaspheme God for the sinnes of his people, and to reproach the rectitude of the rule for the obliquity of their lives, who swarve and vary from it. And by how much the greater ingratitude it is to be honoured by God as his servants are, and yet to dishonour him, by so much the more hainous are those sinnes, whereby we neither sanctifie God in our own hearts, and open the mouths of others to poure contempt upon him.

8. Against the *souls* of our brethren, which are thereby

Qui sibi male vivendi licentiam indulgent, totidem sunt Christianismi probra et mala. Calv. Opusc. de Scandalis. Magna insania est Evangelio non credere, cujus veritatem sanguis Martyrũ Clamat, prodigia probant, ratio confirmat, mundus testatur, Elementa loquuntur, dæmones confitentur. Sed longè major Insania, Si de Evangelii veritate non dubitas, vivere tamen quasi de ejus falsitate non dubitares, &c. Picus mirandula Epist.

thereby greatly ſcandalized, for as there is *joy in Heaven*, and conſequently among the Saints on Earth (whoſe affections and converſations are heavenly) for the converſion of a ſinner, and great mutual comfort in the communion of Saints, inſomuch that the joy of one is *the joy of all* the reſt, 1 *Cor.* 15.31. 2 *Cor.* 2.3. So when a converted perſon relapſeth into any ſinne, it muſt needs ſadden and offend the ſouls of all who rejoyced in his ſtanding, and poſſibly become a ſtumbling block, and an occaſion of falling unto them, as the Apoſtle ſheweth, *Rom.* 15-21. 1 *Cor.* 8.10-13.

9. Againſt the *ſouls* of the *wicked*, who are thereby hardened and encouraged. *Ezek.* 16. 54. when wicked men, who poſſibly had ſome conflict and regret in their Conſciences againſt thoſe ſinnes which their hearts hanker after, obſerve holy men overtaken with them, and indulge unto them, like *Benhadads* ſervants, they haſtily catch at ſuch an advantage, and are emboldened by their example unto ſin, whoſe holy lives they neither love nor imitate. Therefore of all people, they who are called by Gods name, and have him for their God, ſhould in ſpecial manner humble themſelves before him for their ſinnes, as ſins whereby he is in ſpecial manner grieved and diſhonoured, ſhould above all others take heed of playing the wantons with divine grace; for though God be a tender and a loving Father: yet he may be an angry Father, and who *knoweth the power of his anger?* *Pſal.* 90.11. though thou be a Son, and an Heir of ſalvation, yet thou mayeſt be *Filius ſub ira*, a ſon under

der displeasure, and when thou art so, thou wilt finde by sad experience, that *one frown* of his Brow, one stroke of his Rod, hath infinitely more bitterness in it, then there is sweetness in the pleasures of a thousand sinnes. And since Gods own people do by their sins contribute unto publick Judgments, they should be the more carefull to stand in the breach, and to improve their interests in him for the procuring of renewed mercies, to minde him of his gracious Covenant, and of his Fatherly relation unto them, as the Church doth, *Psal.* 74. 20. forget not the Congregation of the poor, *have respect unto thy Covenant*, Thou, O Lord, art our Father, *we are thine*, *Isai.* 63.16-19. Be not wroth very sore, neither remember iniquity for ever, behold, see we beseech thee, *we are all thy people*, *Isa.* 64.9.

Thou art righteous] 1. In thy *Judgements* and chastisements which thou hast inflicted upon us, we cannot blame thy severity, thou didst warne us before thou didst punish us, thy *Trumpet* did sound before thy *Rod* did smite us.

1. Thou art a *Righteous Judge*, when thou *condemnest wicked men*, their mouth shall be stopped, thou wilt overcome when thou judgest, *Psal.* 51. 4. *Rom.* 3.19. thou dost not wrong them, for they shall receive *according to their works*.

2. Thou art a *Righteous Father*, when thou *chastisest* holy men, thou dost not wrong them, thou measurest and proportionest thy stripes not unto their *sinnes*, but unto their *strength*, dealest with them tenderly, and suitably to their cases and conditions:

ditions: To *purge* them, not to conſume them: thou haſt a *Rod* for the *Cummin*, and a *Staffe* for the *Fitches*, and a *wheele* for the *Bread Corn*, *Iſa.* 28. 27,28. thy Rod is *Virga Hominum*, a Rod fitted to the condition of weak men, 2 *Sam.* 7. 14. and the Temptations wherewith thou ſuffereſt thy Children to be tempted, is πειρασμὸς ἀνθρώπινος, proportioned to the infirmities of man, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. thou knoweſt our *frame*, thou remembreſt that we are *duſt*, *Pſal.* 103. 14. that our ſtrength is not the ſtrength of *ſtones*, nor our fleſh of *braſſe*, that we dwell in houſes of *Clay* which are *cruſhed before the Moth*, *Job* 4. 19. 6. 12. and accordingly thou doſt in very faithfulneſs afflict, *to refine*, not to *conſume* us.

3. Yea when thy judgements are *ſecret*, yet they are *righteous*, when wicked men proſper, and good men ſuffer, when wicked men are the Fanne, and good men the Corn, when the Weeds flouriſh, and the Corn is overtopped, when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he, when the affairs of the world ſeem to be out of courſe, and every man out of his place; All this while the Lord makes way for the *revelation of his righteous judgements*: his work will be *beautifull in its time*: all things will *work together* for good, as Materials in a Building, Ingredients in a Cordial, Colours in a Table, *Rom.* 8. 28. The *proſperity* of the wicked will work to his *ruine*, *Prov.* 1. 3. the *affliction* of the righteous will work to his *glory*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. Thus *righteous in thy judgements*, neither thine Enemies, nor thy Children ſhall

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ever haue cauſe juſtly to complaine againſt thee.

Thou art righteous] 2. In thy *Covenant* and promiſes: If thou ſhouldeſt have dealt with us according to our provocations, we had been conſumed, *Lam.* 3. 22. *Jer.* 10. 24. but thou haſt remembred thy gracious *promiſe* to our fathers, and therefore we are preſerved: Though our ſins have forfeited mercy, yet thy truth and faithfulneſs hath fulfilled it: we owe not our *remaining*, that we are a *people*, we owe not our *eſcaping* that we are a *free people*, unto any goodneſs of our own, but unto the grace of the Covenant alone.

Gods truth and fidelity to his people that are in Covenant with him, is *the true ground of all their ſafety*, he doth not *change*, therefore we do not *periſh*, who otherwiſe from the dayes of our Fathers are gone aſtray, *Mal.* 3. 6, 7. his mercies are *from everlaſting to everlaſting*, *Pſal.* 103. 17. from everlaſting in *predeſtination*, to everlaſting in *Glorification*; he *gave grace*, and *promiſed eternal life before the world began*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Tit.* 1. 2. before they were extant, or had any being, (further then in the purpoſe of God,) on whom the grace was beſtowed, to whom the life was promiſed. And what he did from eternity purpoſe, he will not in time revoke, for his *gifts are without repentance*, *Rom.* 11. 29. he doth by his *faith* and fear preſerve his people through his *power*, unto that mercy which he hath from eternity given them, *Jer.* 32. 40. 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. of themſelves they fall dangerouſly and frequently from their own ſtedfaſtneſs, and then

Ab æterno per prædeſtinationem, in æternum per glorificationem. Bernard Serm. 2. in Aſcentione.

Ante mundi conſtitutionem vidit nos, fecit nos Emendavit nos, miſit ad nos, Redemit nos. Hoc ejus conſilium manet in æternum. Aug. Ser. 2. in Pſal. 32.

then the Lord doth chaſtiſe their wantonneſs with the Rod of a Father, but doth not utterly take away his loving kindneſs, *Pſal.* 89.28-35.

1. The Covenant and grace thereof is free and *abſolute*, not conditional and ſuſpended upon the unſtable will of man: *It is not of him that willeth, or runneth, but of God that ſheweth mercy*, and ſheweth it on whom he will, *Rom.*9.15-18. Between God the Father indeed, and Chriſt as a ſecond *Adam*, the Tranſaction of the Covenant was wholly *conditional*, he was to take from his Father a Commiſſion in our nature, *to lay down his life, and to take it up again, to fulfill all righteouſneſs*, to be made *ſinne for us*, to have our iniquities and the *Chaſtiſement of our peace laid upon him*, before he could ſee of the *travel of his ſoul*, Yea he undertook not only for his *own* work, but for *ours*, By the precioufneſs of his blood he *purchaſed*, and out of the plenitude of his Spirit he *ſupplyeth* unto us what ever grace is requiſite unto our ſalvation. But I ſay as to us, the grace of the Covenant is thus farre free and abſolute, that no duties are required of us, which are not as branches of the ſame Covenant beſtowed upon us: he hath promiſed to give a *new heart*, and to put a *new Spirit* within us, to take away the *ſtony heart* out of our fleſh, and to give us *an heart of fleſh*, and to *put his Spirit* within us, and to cauſe us to walk in his Statutes, to ſave us from all our uncleanneſs, to cleanſe us from all our iniquities, *Ezek.*36.25,26,27,29,33. and though he there tell us, that he will be *enquired of* by the houſe of Iſrael to doe theſe things for them, *ver.*37. yet we

know it is he onely who poureth out the Spirit of Grace and Supplication, whereby we make this inquiry of him, *Zach.* 12.10. *Gal.*4.6. *Rom.*8.26. True indeed it is, that when we believe, it is we only that believe, and when we work, it is we that work, but our working is not the cauſe of his grace, but his grace the cauſe of our working: *Certum eſt nos velle & facere cum volumus cum facimus ſed ille facit ut velimus ut faciamus*: And therefore the Apoſtle ſaith *I laboured* more abundantly they they all, to note, that the *labour* was his, yet *not I, but the grace of God* which was with me, to note, that the *principle* was God, 1 *Cor.*15.10. *Thou haſt wrought all our works in us* ſaith the Prophet, *Iſai.* 26.12. The *works* are ours, the *ſtrength* is thine: ours the *heart* and the *hand* that act, thine the *Spirit* and *grace* whereby we act.: he doth not with-hold his love till our wills prevent him, and move him to extend it, but he doth out of his own free love frame our hearts unto the love of him, and work the will in us, which he requireth of us, *Phil.*2, 12, 13. we repent becauſe he turns us: he doth not turn to us, becauſe we firſt turn to him: his love prevents ours and doth not ſtay for it, 1 *John* 4. 19. *Ezek.*36.32. *Iſai.*48.9,11. *Inſpirat charitatem ut quæ diſcendo novimus diligendo faciamus.*

*Aug. de Grat. & Lib. Arbit. cap.*16.

*Dyſ. Anchor, ipſe Remunerator operis, ipſe Remuneratio tota. Bernard in Pſal.*91. *Ser.*9.

*Ille facit ut nos faciamus quæ præcepit, nos non facimus ut ille faciat quæ promiſit Aug, Ep.*143.

*Vid. Bradward. de cauſa Dei lib.*1. *cap.*23.24 25.

2. The Covenant and the grace thereof is *immutable*, and therefore changeth not with the unſtable will of man: *God is not a man that he ſhould lie, neither the Son of man that he ſhould repent, hath he ſaid, and ſhall he not doe it? hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not make it good? Numb.*23.19. his Covenant of grace

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is confirmed by an *oath*, to ſhew the *immutability* of it. *This is as the waters of Noah unto me, ſaith the Lord, for I have ſworn that the waters of Noah ſhould no more go over the earth: ſo have I ſworn that I will not be wroth with thee nor rebuke thee.* For the Mountains ſhall depart, and the hills be removed: but my kindneſs ſhall not depart from thee: *Neither ſhall the Covenant of my peace be removed*, ſaith the Lord that hath mercy on thee, *Iſai.* 54. 9, 10. A Covenant thus founded upon meer *mercy*, and ſealed by an *Oath*, is more unmoveable then hills, or Mountains, the ſtrong foundations of the Earth ſhall be ſooner ſhaken then the *Oath* of God miſcarry: The oath of God is the ſtrongeſt demonſtration of the immutability of his Counſel that can poſſibly be uſed, *Heb.* 6. 17. for where he ſwears he doth not repent, *Pſal.* 110. 4. Every work of mercy which he begins, he carries on to a conſummation, *Phil.* 1. 6. the foundation of God remaineth ſure, cannot be infringed, ſhaken or undermined by the levity or inconſtancy of the will of man, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. what ever are the fluctuations of the heart of man, the Counſel of the Lord ſhall ſtand, *Prov.* 19. 21. *Pſal.* 33. 10, 11.

Furatione Dei firmata promiſſio. Aug. de Civ. dei. lib. 16. *cap.* 32.

3. The Covenant and grace thereof is moſt *powerfull* and *efficacious*: Therefore his Mercies are ſure, his *promiſes yea and Amen*, becauſe his word is ſetled in Heaven, ſeconded with his power, which will finde means to effect what ever he hath ſpoken, *God hath ſpoken once* ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *twice have* I *heard this*, It is a word conſtant and ſtable, a word doubled to note the certainty of it (as *Joſeph*

ſaid unto *Pharaoh*, *Gen.*41.32.) That power and mercy belong to God, *Pſal.*62.11,12. every promiſe which *mercy* makes, *power* performs, if *mercy* promiſe an heart of fleſh, and to put his fear into us, God hath *power* enough to make it good, hee may as ſoon be an impotent, as an unfaithfull God. *Abraham* conſidered not the impotency of his own body, but the *power of God* to make good his promiſe, and therefore *ſtaggered not through unbelief*, *Rom.*4.19,20,21. and ſo the Apoſtle argues touching the converſion of the Jews, *Rom.*11.23. If they abide not ſtill in unbelief, they ſhall be graffed in, for *God is able to graffe them in*, *Rom.*11.23.

4. The Covenant and grace thereof is *invincible* by any adverſe aſſaults, nothing can alter or overrule the will of God, or cauſe him to recede from his own purpoſes of ſhewing mercy. If any thing could, *ſinne* could: But he hath aſſured us that that ſhall not. *If his children forſake my Law, and walk not in my Judgements, if they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandements, then will I viſit their tranſgreſſions with a rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes; Nevertheleſs my loving kindneſſe will I not utterly take from him, nor ſuffer my faithfulneſſe to fail, my Covenant will I not break, &c.* *Pſal.*89.30.--34. though he puniſh, it ſhall be in *meaſure*; not unto rejection but unto emendation, *Iſai.*27.8,9. As to the *guilt* of ſinne, and damnation due unto it, he will pardon it, *I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their ſinne no more*, *Jer.*31.34. As to the *dominion* thereof, he will ſubdue it, and purge it away, *Micah* 7.19,20. *Pſal.*65.3. As to the particular *prevalency*

valency of any luſt, he will awaken us to repent. Make us by ſome word, or affliction, or mercy, or example, or providence, to ſearch and conſider our wayes and return from all our evill doings, ſo he did *David* by the Miniſtery of *Nathan*, 2 *Sam.* 12. 13. ſo *Peter* by the look of *Chriſt*, *Luke* 22. 61. ſo *Joſephs* brethren by his ſpeaking roughly unto them, *Gen.* 42. 21. As to the *Remainders* of it, he will daily mortifie and deſtroy them, *Ro.* 6. 6. ſinne then ſhall not break out ſo far as to annull and to evacuate the Covenant: For who then ſhould be ſaved? ſeeing in many things we offend all, and by the grace of the Covenant alone are preſerved from offending more. Nay the Lord is ſo gracious to his people, that their very *ſins*, which of themſelves do only defile and endanger them, are by Gods goodneſs ordered unto their benefit. The Lord could keep his ſervants from falling, *Jude ver.* 24. and preſerve them blameleſs. 1 *Theſ.* 5. 23. but he is pleaſed ſometimes to leave them, that they may know themſelves, and their own weakneſs, as he did *Hezekiah*, 2 *Chron.* 32. 31. that they may *lemoan* their own miſery, and loath themſelves in their own eyes, *Jer.* 31. 18, 19. *Ezek.* 20. 43. that they may be driven to *live upon free grace* and pardoning mercy, *Pſal.* 51. 1. that they may ſet the *higher price* upon the *Lord Jeſus*, who is a Sanctuary for the chief of ſinners to fly unto, *Iſai.* 8. 14. 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. that they may be the more *watchfull* over their looſe and deceitfull hearts, having once, yea twice been betrayed by them, *Job* 40. 5. 34. 32. that they may *pray more earneſtly* for the ſubduing and mortifying of prevalent

Adeo Juſtis omnia Cooperantur in Bonum ut etiam ſi qui eorum deviant & exorbitant, etiam hoc ipſum eis faciat proficere in bonum, quia Humiliores redeunt atque doctiores. Aug. de Corrept. & Grat. cap. 6. vid. de nat. & Grat. 28. An vero ei peccata ipſa non Cooperantur in Bonum qui ex eis humilior, ferventior, ſolicitior, timoratior & Cautior invenitur? Bern. Scr. 1. de diverſis.

prevalent corruptions, *Psal.* 51. 7-10. *Rom.* 7. 23. these and other the like ways, the Lord hath to order the very sins of his people unto their good. And if sinne shall not prevaile against the covenant, we are sure nothing else shall: he that pardoneth sin rebuketh Satan, conquereth the world, his love is above the reach of any thing to separate us from it. *Rom.* 8. 33-39. none shall be able to take us out of Christs or his Fathers hands, *Joh.* 10. 28-30.

5. The Covenant and grace thereof is *founded* in the *blood of Christ* and ratified by it: as he hath by his blood purchased his people, *Tit.* 2. 14. so hath he by the same procured for them *all good things* specified in the Covenant, *Rom.* 8. 32. the blood of Christ can as well be vacated, as any branch of the the Covenant be unfulfilled to believers, for whom they were all bought with so precious a price.

6. His purchase is seconded by his *Intercession*, Intercession is the petition of his blood, and therefore shall undoubtedly be granted, his Father *heareth him alwayes*, *John* 11. 41, 42. and he prayeth to his Father that his people may be so *kept*, as that they may be with him, and *behold his glory*, *Joh.* 17. 11. 15. 24. therefore accordingly they shall be kept.

Vid. Camero. de Eccles. pag. 120.-126. in 4to.

7. Christs Intercession is seconded with his *Fathers love* to his people, I say not that I will pray the Father for you, for *the Father himself loveth you*, saith Christ, *John* 16. 26, 27. and therefore must needs be exceeding acceptable, because Gods own heart

heart is towards them, and his love upon them, as the woman of *Tekoa* her petition for *Abſolom* was eaſily granted by *David*, becauſe his heart was towards him before, 2 *Sam.* 13. 39. and 14. 1, 2.

Laſtly, the Lord hath promiſed his holy Spirit of Fear, Love, Grace, Adoption unto his people, by the help of which they are preſerved from the dangers whereunto of themſelves they are expoſed, *Ezek.* 36. 27. *Iſai.* 59. 21. upon theſe and ſuch like grounds it appeareth; That becauſe God is *righteous* and *faithfull* in his Covenant, therefore we *remain eſcaped.*

And if it be here objected that the Promiſes are uſually ſet forth as conditionall, *The Lord is with you while ye be with him*, and *if ye ſeek him he will be found of you, but if ye forſake him, he will forſake you*, 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. *If ye be willing and obedient, ye ſhall eat the good of the Land*, *Iſai.* 1. 19. *He that believeth ſhall be ſaved*, *Mark* 16. 16. *Joh.* 3. 16. *except ye repent ye ſhall periſh*, *Luke* 13. 3.

We anſwer, 1. Promiſes are in ſome places made *abſolutely*, which in others are *conditionally* expreſſed; as *Heb.* 13. *I will not leave thee nor forſake thee*, *Ier.* 32. 39. *I will give them one heart and one way*, that they may fear me for ever, *I will give them an heart to know me, they ſhall be my people, I will be their God, they ſhall return unto me with their whole heart*, *Ier.* 24. 7. If ye will obey my voice and keep my Covenant, is a *Condition* in one place, *Exod.* 19. 5. a *free promiſe* in another, *ye ſhall keep my judgements and doe them*, *Ezek.* 36. 27. *The mercy of the Lord is towards them that fear him*, *Pſal.* 103. 11. There the

the fear of God is a condition. I will give them one heart and one way *that they may fear me*, *Jer.* 32. 39. there it is *a free promise*.

2. The Lord doth not only give us good things under a condition, but doth *give the condition* it self to his people, compare *Isai.* 1.19. with *Phil.* 2.12. *Acts* 10.43. with *Phil.* 1.29. *Ephes.* 2.8.

3. Precepts and Conditions are used as the *vehicula* of the grace promised. Of our selves we can do nothing of those duties unto which *Promises* are annexed, for *all our sufficiency is of God*, who *worketh all our works for us*, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. But the Precepts of the Word are the usual Instruments, by which he worketh those things in us, which he requireth of us, *Rom.* 10. 17.

4 Conditionall Propositions do not imply that our performances work upon God to do what he had said, as if the performance of *duty* were only ours, and then the performance of *promise* alone his: But they intimate *the order* and *connexion* which the Lord hath set amongst his own gifts, some whereof he hath appointed to be *antecedent dispositions* and preparations towards others consequent upon them: *He that believeth shall be saved*, this is a *conditional promise*, Faith the condition, Salvation the Promise; But we may not so understand it as if Faith were only ours, and Salvation alone his. But *Faith* is one Gift of God, Antecedent to *Salvation* which is another Gift of God.

Use 1. Now then since the Lord is righteous in all the wayes of his Judgements and secret providences, we

we must for ever lay our Hand on our Mouth, and put our Mouthes in the Dust, and beware of Murmuring and Repining against him, as if his wayes were not equall towards us: Behold *he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, what dost thou?* *Iob* 9. 12. we may in our Prayers *plead* with God about his Judgements as Holy men have, Jer. 12. 1. *Habak.* 1. 2-4-13. But we may not *quarrell* at them nor *murmure* against them.

2. When the Lord doth strangely vary his Providences towards a people, and worketh unusuall changes and alterations among them: stirreth up some helpes, and then layeth them by, calleth forth others and quickly revokerh them, fitteth men for great actions, and in the midst of those actions cutteth them off; Our work here is not to censure either the Agent, or the Instruments, to charge the dealings of God either as unrighteous or as unreasonable; but to reflect upon our selves, and learn our *unstedfastnesse* in Gods Covenant, by his *diversifying of Providences* towards us: 1. Sometimes we over dote upon Instruments, and deifie them, as if God had no way to help us but one. And then God breaks that Staffe when we lean too hard upon it, to force us to *leane upon his Name* again. 2. Sometimes we undervalue them, and will not understand that God is doing us good by them, (as it is said of *Moses*, *Acts* 7. 25.) and then God suspendeth his work which he was about to doe. 3. Sometimes the hearts of the people are unprepared for mercies, and then God

doth not honour his Instruments with setling them. *Jehoshaphat* was a good King, yet he did not work a perfect Reformation, the high places were not taken away, and this the reason, *the people had not as yet prepared their hearts unto the God of their Fathers*, 2 *Chron.*20,32,33. 4. Sometimes the guilt of old sinnes do remain uncleansed away, as it is said of the iniquity of *Baal-Peor*, *Iosh*,22.17. and in this case Instruments are too weak to divert wrath, 2 *Reg.*23.25,26. Never such a Reformation as *Iosiah* made about the eighteenth year of his reign, and yet because the people returned *but fainedly*, *Ier.*3.10. within a few years after they were carried into Captivity. Our Saviour was very near his *Sufferings* when they cryed *Hosanna* before him. The Sun often shews biggest, and shines brightest, when it is ready to set; The Candle blazeth most when it is in the Socket; Many times dying men, and it may be so with dying Churches, have a lightning before death.

I speak not this to bode ill unto the Land of my nativity. If any say it shal not be so, but we shall still have Peace, and Truth, and Holiness flourish, I will chearfully say as the Prophet did, *Ier.*28.6. Amen: the Lord do so for this Land: But withall, happy is the man that feareth always, *Prov.* 28.14. The sins of the people may weaken the hands of the best Instruments, and make them unable to help us. It is noted as a cause of wickedness that men have *no changes*, *Psal.*55.19. *Ier.*48.11. But to be tossed and emptied, and exercised with frequent alterations, and our sent to abide in us still, wanton

ton under Mercies, ſullen under Judgements, after all our Phiſick to relapſe, after all that is come upon us, *again to break the Commandements*, this is a ſad Symptome, a great aggravation of our ſin, and juſtification of Gods Righteouſneſs in all his dealings with us.

Again, ſince the Lord is the God of his people, and righteous to them in a way of mercy and fidelity, We learn to acknowledge it a great Mercy, and to glorifie God for it, that we *Remaine yet eſcaped:* that we may ſet up an *Eben-Ezer*, and ſay thus far hath the Lord holpen us.

Many Conſiderations may ſet on the ſenſe of this Mercy upon our hearts. 1. The many ſinnes which remain amongſt us, even in the Iſrael of God: ſad diviſions, ſharp animoſities, perverſe Opinions, vanity, luxury; ſevere cenſurings, looſe walking, worldly mindedneſs, &c. 2. The many *ſhakings*, and univerſal ſufferings, whereby the Lord hath made it appear that his quarrel was againſt all orders of men, that the diſeaſe was all over, *Iſai.1.6. Ier.5.1-5.* ſo that none can blame others, but every one acknowledge *the plague of his own heart*, and ſay as *David* did, *I confeſs my ſinne, and the ſin of my people*, *Dan. 9.20.* Now various ſhakings and concuſſions in a Nation uſe to be ſore preſages of greater Judgements, as we may ſee in Gods dealing with the ten Tribes before their diſſolution. What ſhakings have been amongſt us, we need not *recount*, by changes at home, by differences abroad, ſhakings on the Land, and ſhakings on the Sea, ſhakings at hand, and ſhaking afar off,

ſhakings by War, and ſhakings by ſickneſſes, ſhakings in our mindes by divided Opinions, ſhakings in our hearts by divided affections, ſhaking in our eſtates by divided intereſts. And whether theſe ſhakings have a tendency to diſſolution we know not, (we are not ignorant of the rage which hath been upon many of our Proteſtant Brethren in other parts of Chriſtendom) But ſurely this conſideration may lead us both to glorifie God that we *Remain yet eſcaped*, and to humble our ſelves under the feare of his further wrath.

3. The powerful *Preaching* which hath been in the Land which where it doth not kindly work, where it is not honourably entertained, doth exceedingly ripen Judgements, and make white for the ſickle. It is compared to the ſhining of the Sun, 2 *Cor.* 4. 6. 2 *Pet.* 1. 19. and to ſhowers of rain, *Deut.* 32. which are intended for the bringing forth of Salvation, and ſpringing up of Righteouſneſs, *Iſai.* 45. 8. But if they fall upon ſins, doe haſten their maturity, and make them *nigh unto curſing*, *Heb.* 6. 7, 8. the ſins of the *Church* are *Summer Fruits*, they ripen faſter then the ſinnes of the *world*, the ſins of the *Amorites* were four hundred years a ripening, *Gen.* 15. 16. the ſins of Iſrael in the Wilderneſs fourty years, *Pſal.* 95. 10. Gods patience towards the ten Tribes after their revolt was but two hundred and ſixty years; from the ſins of *Manaſſeh* to the Captivity brought upon Judah for thoſe ſins, little more then one hundred years. As at Jerico the ſounding of the Trumpet ſeven times did lead in the falling of the wall, ſo the

the long ſounding of the Word in the ears of diſobedient people, is a ſhrewd preſage of enſuing ruine.

Theſe conſiderations laid together, as ſhould they juſtly awaken us to Humiliation, ſo are they Evidences of Gods goodneſs towards us, in that ſuch a people *Remain yet eſcaped*. Eſcaped from the bondage of Popery, from the flames of perſecution, from the *Spaniſh Armado*, from the vault of Powder, from rigour in the Church, from troubles in the State, from the terrour of a bloudy War, from renewed attempts of trouble and danger, eſcaped from a Vote, extinguiſhing and abolithing the whole maintenance of the Miniſtery, the conſequences whereof could not but have been unutterably miſerable. Any one of theſe evils God might have ſharpned into a deſtruction. And yet after all this, *Righteous art thou, O Lord, for we remain yet eſcaped.*

2. It reproueth our unbelief, in conſulting with fleſh and blood, betaking our ſelves to carnall ſhifts in time of danger, having a *faithfull Covenant*, and a *righteous God* to lay hold upon, whoſe alone fidelity is the ground of his peoples ſafety, *who knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 9. this was the ſin of *Ahaz* in ſending to the Aſſyrian to help him, when God offered him a ſign to confirm his truſt in him, *Iſai.* 7. 11, 12. 2 *Chron.* 28. 19. The Chriſtians in the Church of *Corinth*, being afraid to diſpleaſe their Heathen friends, and endanger themſelves, would ſit with them at the Idols Table, and eat at their Tables meat offered

to

to Idols: The Apostle diswadeth them from using this Carnal shift to decline danger, bids them *flee from Idolatry*, lest that which they in carnal wisdom might judge the means of their standing, should prove the occasion of their fall, and directeth them to trust for safety in a faithfull God, who would not suffer them to be tempted above that they were able, but would with the temptation make a way to escape, that they might be able to bear it, 1 *Cor.*10.13,14.

3. In fears therefore and dangers we should be incouraged by these two Arguments; 1. The *Righteousness of God.* 2. Our own present *remaining escaped*, *Faith* in, and *experience* of the fidelity of God to help us, to trust in him at all times: not to fear the wrath of man, but to secure the love of God, he sometimes purposely bringeth his servants to difficulties, that they may make tryal of such a friend, who in six and seven troubles is at hand to deliver them. Faith is a *venturous* grace, it honours God and laies hold on his strength, *Rom.* 4.20. *Isai.*27.5. It is a *victorious* grace, and rises up above difficulties, 1 *Joh.*5.4. all things are possible to it: Therefore in times of danger let us plead Gods Covenant, and our own experience, Lord wilt thou now destroy us seeing we *remain*, *yet escaped*, and are Monuments of thy Mercy? hast thou wrought so great deliverances, and done so many wonders, and snatcht us as brands out of the fire, to destroy us at the last? thou hast delivered, and dost deliver, wilt thou not give us leave to trust in thee for deliverance still? Though the

Lord

Lord had broken us in the place of Dragons, and had cast us off and put us to shame; yet even so we may lean upon his Name, and plead his Covenant, *Psal.*44.17,19. *Psal.*74.1-20. *Isai.*64.8-12. *Hab.* 3.17, 18. How much more comfortably may we plead it, when by the alone mercy thereof, *we remain escaped*? When we may say as the people of *Joseph* did, *Josh.*17.14. we are a great people, and the *Lord hath hitherto blessed us*? and may set up a Monument as *Samuel* did, 1 *Sam.*7.12. and say, *thus far hath the Lord holpen us*? This is one chief Argument which Gods servants use in Prayer, to mind him of his Word and Covenant, wherein he had caused them to hope, so *Jacob*, I am not worthy of the least mercy, *but thou saidst, I will doe thee good*, *Gen.*32.9-12. so *Moses*, we remain yet escaped out of the Land of *Egypt*, *thou hast brought us out thence*, *turn from thy fierce wrath*; *Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel thy servants*, to whom thou sware-est, &c. *Exod.*32.11-13. and again, let the power of my Lord be great, *according as thou hast spoken*, pardon the iniquity of thy people, as thou hast forgiven them from *Egypt* untill now; As they remain yet escaped, so save them still; the same Mercy and Power can do it now which did it before, *Numb.*14.17,19. so *David*, *Thou hast spoken of thy servants house, for thy words sake* hast thou done these great things: and *now O Lord establish thy word, do as thou hast said*, 2 *Sam.*7.19,21,25,27,29. So *Solomon*, *Let thy word be verified* which thou spakest unto thy servant *David*, 1 *Reg.*8.26. So *Asa*, O Lord we rest in thee, *thou art our God*, 2 *Chron.*14. 11. so *Ie-*

shaphat.

Shaphat, Thou art God—our eyes are upon thee, 2 *Chr.* 20.6-12. no such plea in Prayer as the free grace, the Word, the Truth, the Fidelity, the Righteousness of God.

Ut totum Deo detur, Hominis voluntatem bonam & præparat adjuvandam & adjuvat præparatam. Aug Enchirid. cap, 32.

4. This may comfort us against all the mutability of our own wills, whereby we are apt to start aside like a deceitfull Bow; In as much as our safety dependeth not upon our own performances, but upon the Covenant of God, who is righteous and faithfull, and will not suffer our weakness to annul his promise, *Rom.9.16.*

Si Deus misereatur etiam volumus ad eandem quippe Gratiam pertinet ut velimus Ad Simplicium Qu. 2. & Epist. 106.

5. This Caution notwithstanding we must take in, That we beware of playing the wantons with the grace of Gods Covenant, because thereby we remain escaped; for the Lord will not pass by the petulancy and lasciviency of any of his Children, though he doth not totally cast them off, yet he hath sharp rods wherewith he can chastise them. If they fly from his service, he can send a Whale to swallow them, and can bring all his Waves and Billows upon them; if they keep not to his Commission, he can send a Lion to tear them, he can make them feel the weight of his *Frowns*, though they do not of his *Fury*, and it may be, cause them to walk in darkness, drooping, and disconsolate all their days, complaining of *broken Bones*, and of a *wounded Spirit*, with strong cryes, imploring the comforts of that Spirit, which they had so unkindly greived and resisted.

As it is this day I escaped, escaped *this day* in which we lie under so sore and heavy a guilt. This is a marvellous heightning of Gods *Mercy*, That

That we may remain eſcaped in *this day*, a day of ſo great ſin: and alſo a marvellous aggravation of the ſin, that it hath been committed in *this day*, a day of ſo great Mercy, wherein we *remain yet eſcaped*. *Sinne* committed *in a day of mercy*, is the more exceeding *hainous*: *mercy* extended *in a day of ſin*, is the more exceeding *glorious*. That we ſhould ſo greatly provoke the Lord, *this day*, wherein we *remain eſcaped*: O how prodigious and preſumptuous the wickedneſs? That we ſhould remain eſcaped *this day*, wherein we have ſo greatly provoked the Lord, O how admirable and unſearchable the goodneſs?

1. Sinne in a day of great *Mercy* is exceedingly the more hainous. It is a great aggravation of ſinne, when it withſtandeth *Judgements*, when the Lord changeth the corrections, and men ſtill hold faſt their ſins, *Amos* 4.6-12. and *turn not unto him that ſmiteth them*, *Iſai.* 9.13. It is a brand upon *Ahaz* that *in the day of his diſtreſſe he ſinned more*, 2 *Chron.* 28.22. How much more hainous is it to abuſe *Mercy* and Loving kindneſs? It is the character of a wicked man, that *though favour be ſhewed him, yet he will not learn righteouſneſs*, *Iſai.* 26.10. The Angell ſpared *Balaam*, and yet he ran greedily after the *wages of iniquity*, *Numb.* 22.35. This is an unkindneſs the Lord often upbraideth his people with, *Deut.* 32.13-15. *Jer.* 22.21. *Hoſ.* 13.5. *Amos* 2.9-13. This made *Solomons* ſin the greater, that he turned from the God of Iſrael, who *had appeared to him twice*, 1 *King.* 11.9. This adds diſingenuity, unthankfulneſs, unkindneſs unto diſobedi-

ence, when men neither fear, nor love the Lord for his goodneſs: No ſurfets more dangerous then thoſe which are upon ſweet things: no diſeaſes more deſperate, then thoſe which reject Cordials; no Fruits ripen faſter, then thoſe on which the Sun continually ſhineth: as the Apoſtle ſaith of grace, where ſin abounded, grace did much more abound, ſo we may by an inverſion ſay of ſin, where grace aboundeth, there the guilt of ſin is the more abundant.

2. *Mercy* extended *in a day of ſinne*, is the more exceeding glorious, when the Lord is pleaſed to proclaim mercy to a divorced people, *Jer.* 3.12-15. in the midſt of provoked *wrath to remember mercy*, *Hab.* 3.2. and when men *go on frowardly* in their own ways, then *to heal them*, to reſtore comfort to them, to create peace, *Iſai.* 57.17-19. *to heal a backſliding people*, and to love them freely, *Hoſ.* 14.14. To look back upon a denying *Peter*, *Luke* 22.61. To ſend a pardon to an adulterous *David*, 2 *Sam.* 12. 13. To call from Heaven to a perſecuting *Saul*, *Acts* 9.4. This is that which maketh Mercy the more radiant, which magnifieth the freeneſs, fulneſs, and ſuperabundance of it, that it rejoyceth againſt judgment, *Jam.* 2.13.

Theſe conſiderations tend much to *humble a people* which *remain yet eſcaped*, as we do this day.

The ſad conjunctions of our ſins with the Lords goodneſs, when the Lord ſaith, *I will remember my Covenant*, and *thou ſhalt remember thy wayes*, Then he ſaith, *thou ſhalt be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, becauſe of thy ſhame, when I am pacified*

cified towards thee, Ezek. 16,60-63. When we compare his Mercy with our corrupt doings, then is a time to loath our ſelves in our own ſight, *Ezek.* 20. 42-44. 36. 25-32. Sin *puniſhed*, doth many times harden a ſinner in pride, as we ſee in *Pharaoh*. But ſin *pardoned*, and ſubdued with Mercy, ſhould melt the ſoul into a godly ſorrow, holy revenge, and ſelf diſplicency for it: They ſhall *ſhall fear the Lord and his goodneſs* in the latter dayes.

O let us learn to bewail our wickedneſs, in that we have ventured on it in a day of Mercy, as if we had been delivered to commit abominations, *Jer.* 7. 10. as if priviledges were a protection to profaneneſs. Certainly if mercies be aggravations of ſin, no Nation in the world is leſs excuſable then we. What Nation in the Earth hath God ſo honoured with a long poſſeſſion of his Oracles, and glorious light of his Word? In ſo much that other Nations ſtudy the *Engliſh* Tongue to read our Books; What Nation hath ever had ſuch manifold, ſuch miraculous deliverances? What Nation hath the Lord Crowned with a greater abundance of all good things? What means could be uſed to work upon a people which the Lord hath not made uſe of amongſt us? If teaching would work upon us, we have had his *Word*; If Chaſtiſements would amend us, we have had his *Sword*. If *bounty* would perſwade us, we have been fed, and cloathed, and healed, and crowned, and compaſſed with mercies more then we can recount. If ſtrange and unparalleld *Providences* would awaken us, this Nation hath never had for many hundred years ſuch a

prospects of Gods works, such interwoven mixtures of Mercies, of Judgements, of Wonders, of Terrors. Great Instruments raised up, and taken away again, Wars raging, and again ceasing, Seas roaring, and again calmed. And certainly the Works of the Lord should be sought out of his people, *Psal*, 111. 2. and improved to their own accompt. Felt Judgements should mak them out of love with sin: Renewed mercies should make them in love with God. That which humbleth should heal them, that which comforts should cure them, that which amazeth, should amend them.

2. This is a strong Argument in Prayer for penitent sinners to use, that God hath mercy in store even in a day of sin for his people: that though we have trespassed against God, yet *there is hope in Israel concerning this thing*, *Ezra* 10.2. That though sin do ever *forfeit* mercy, yet it doth not ever *remove* it; though it do always *provoke* wrath, yet it doth not always *procure* it; how will mercy triumph in a day of repentance, when so great provocations have not hitherto extinguished it? how will fire break forth in dry wood, when it hath prevailed against the green? needs must that Jewel be glorious in the Sun, which glisters in the Night. This should exceedingly encourage us unto Repentance. Doth the Lorld invite backsliding Israel, doth he wait to be gracious to a secure people, doth he pitty us in our blood, and are his bowels kindled towards us, when we compass him about with lies and deceit? doth he look back with pitty upon a a denying *Peter*? doth he speak pardon from Heaven

ven unto a perſecuting *Paul*? doth he ſhew mercy on a *Manaſſeh*, filling *Jeruſalem* with blood and Idols? doth he appear firſt unto *Mary Magdalen*, out of whom he he had caſt ſeven Devils? O who would not be encouraged by ſuch examples, to fly for ſanctuary from the wrath to come, unto that mercy which hath ſnatched theſe as brands out of the fire? The Lord keeps as open houſe for us as for them, *Iſa.* 55.1. *Rev.*22.17. his mercy as abundant for any other penitents as for them, *Iſa.* 55. 6, 7,8. his call and invitation the ſame to us as to them, *Joh.*7.37,38. The blood of Chriſt as effectuall for us as for them, 1 *Ioh.*2.2. They were ſet forth *as examples to all that ſhould after believe in him unto eternal life*, 1 *Tim.*1.16.

Only let us beware of profaning this comfort by perſiſting in our ſins: But follow the example of theſe penitents here, though their ſin had not removed Gods mercy, yet Gods mercy did remove their ſin. They entred into a *Covenant*, *ſware* to the Lord, gave their *hands* that they would *put away their ſtrange wives*, and *ſeparate themſelves from the people of the Land*, *Ezra* 10. 3, 11, 12, 19. This is a Genuine work of true *hope* in mercy, when it makes us *purifie our ſelves* 1 *Ioh.*3.3. no man can hope for glory, who is an enemy to Grace, for glory is grace perfected, and we can hope for nothing which we hate, he that hates Grace, doth not love Glory.

3. We note that in ſolemn Humiliations there is a great Emphaſis in theſe words, *As it is this day*, It is a circumſtance greatly conſiderable, The *time* wherein we have ſinned and eſcaped, *Time* greatly

greatly aggravates *ſin*, *Exod.* 8. 32. *Luke* 19. 42. *Time* greatly commends *Mercy*, that God kept touch with his people to a very day, *Exod.* 12. 41, 42. Therefore we ſhould learn wiſdome to improve *time* unto duty, as it is ſaid of the Children of *Iſſachar*, that *they had underſtanding of the times to know what Iſrael ought to do*, 1 *Chron.* 12. 32. Who knoweth ſaid *Mordecai* to *Eſter*, whether thou be come to the Kingdom *for ſuch a time as this*, *Eſter* 4. 14. Let us therefore wiſely conſider the condition of the times which God hath brought upon us. Times of great and univerſal ſickneſs and infirmity, after he had not many moneths ſince upon Prayer, removed ſuch diſtempers in good part: ſurely his anger is not turned away, his hand is ſtretched out ſtill, becauſe we have not unfeignedly turned unto him that ſmiteth us.

2. Times of wonderfull changes and unſetledneſs, many preparations and attempts to heal the breaches amongſt us, and many abortions and miſcarriages in thoſe attempts, Honourable perſons raiſed up by God to ſerve the Intereſts of the Nations, and by his Providence laid down again. And when the Lord had by his providence raiſed up this eminent Inſtrument, now gone to him, by whoſe great Wiſdom, accurate intelligence, indefatigable vigilancy, and ſpecial care, we might probably have ſuppoſed that by degrees things would have wrought unto a compoſedneſs, and ſettlement in the midſt of great Actions and great Succeſſes, he likewiſe is ſuddenly taken away. It is good to ſtudy the meaning of God in theſe things. 1. That we

we ſnould bewail our *carnall confidence*, and learn to look up and to truſt more in Him, and leſs in man. 2. To labour for *hearts eſtabliſhed by his grace*, that we may the more comfortably look for an outward eſtabliſhment in order and peace, for our ſettlement muſt begin in our hearts, ſo long as our hearts are unſteadfaſt with God, his dealings may be ſtill in fluctuation and uncertainty towards us. 3. To acknowledge notwithſtanding theſe ſad changes and concuſſions, this great Mercy, *That we remain yet eſcaped*, that the Lord hath not yet ſaid unto us that he would caſt us off, hath not expoſed us to thoſe flames and commotions which our ſins have deſerved, but that yet we ſit under our Vines and Fig-trees, and none make us afraid.

Laſtly, to caſt Anchor on the Rock of Ages, and keep cloſe to the Throne of Gace, to ſecure his love and care of us, his preſence and Throne amongſt us, who never dies, in whom there is *everlaſting ſtrength*, to get firm holdfaſt of thoſe Comforts which have nothing of Mortality, nothing of Lubricity in them, which will ſtay with us while we remain here to ſweeten all the paſſages of our Pilgrimage, and accompany us unto the preſence of the Lord, in whoſe preſe[illegible] is fulneſſe of Joy, [illegible] are pleaſures fo[illegible]

Gods fidelity,

THE

CHURCHES SAFETY:

Opened in a

SERMON

Preached before the Lord Major, Aldermen, and Common-Councel, at *Lawrence-Jury* Church, on wednesday *Septem.* 15. 1658. Being a day of Humiliation by them appointed.

By EDWARD REYNOLDS, D. D.

LONDON,

Printed by *Tho. Ratcliffe* for *George Thomason* at the Sign of the *Rose* and *Crown* in St. *Pauls* Church-yard, 1659.

Amplissimis, Praestantissimis

Consultissimis Viris

D. IOANNI LIRETON

Honoratissimo Domino Praeceptori,

MAGISTRATIBUS UNIVERSIS,

TOTIQUE SENATUI

Celeberrimae Florentissimaque Civitatis

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Concionem hanc coram ipsis habitam

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TESTIMONIUM,
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EZRA 9. 15.

O LORD GOD *of Israel, thou art righteous, for we remain yet escaped as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our trespasses, for we cannot stand before thee because of this.*

IN the former part of this Book, we have a Narration of many great mercies of God to his people after their long and sore captivity.

1. The Edict of *Cyrus* for return of the people, building the Temple, restoreing of the holy Vessels, *Chap.* 1.

2. The pursuance of that Edict in the return of 49000 and upward, *Chap.* 2.

3. The beginning of the restitution of Gods worship, setting up the Altar, offering Sacrifices,

laying the Foundations of the House, with Trumpets and joy, *Chap.* 3.

4. The special assistance and encouragement they received in the work by the Prophets, notwithstanding the opposition of the adversaries, *Chap.* 5. 1, 6, 14.

5. The gracious Decree of *Darius* for promoting the building, after it had been obstructed, his Princely munificence thereunto, the command given to the Enemies to be serviceable to the work, the finishing and dedication of the House, and keeping of the Passeover, *Chap.* 6.

6. The gracious commission of *Artaxerxes* to *Ezra* for further promoting the worship of God at *Jerusalem*, his indulgence to Priests and Levites, ordering of Magistrates and Judges, *Chap.* 7.

7. The expedition of *Ezra*, and divers others with this Commission; The delivery of the Silver, Gold, and Vessels which the King, his Counsellors, Lords, and all Israel, had offered to the house of the Lord into the hands of twelve select men of the Priests: the gracious preservation of *Ezra* and his company in their journey from the hands of those that lay in wait for them, after they had solemnly sought God by prayer and fasting, their safe arrival, delivery of the offering to the House of the Lord, success of the Commission, *Cap.* 8.

Thus far things went comfortably on, and with good success, notwithstanding the opposition and obstruction given to the work for a time by the Enemies thereof, of which we read, *Chap.* 4.

But in this ninth Chapter we meet with a farre

more

more dangerous obstruction then any had before been: an horrible sinne committed by Priests, Levites, people, wherein the hands of the Princes and Rulers had been cheif, in mingling the holy seed in marriage with the people of those Lands: contrary to an expresse command, *Deut.* 7. 1, 3. *Thou shalt not make marriages with them, &c.* whereby the worship of God now newly restored, was in danger to be speedily subverted again, *Deut.* 7. 4. *Exo.* 34. 15, 16. as we finde by the example of *Solomon*, 1 *Reg.* 11. 4, 8. Hercupon *Ezra* is affected with zeal, sorrow, and astonishment, *ver.* 3, 4, 5. and *unto him were assembled every one that trembled at the word of the God of Israel, to humble* themselves before God: and to *consult* what in so desperate a case was necessary to be done for diverting that wrath which they had provoked, *ver.* 3, 4. *Ezra* prepareth and composeth himself in a solemn manner to pray, rends his garments, falls on his knees, spreads forth his hands, stirs up his faith, takes the fittest season, *the time of the Sacrifice*, when God might be minded by the blood of Attonement, to recieve his prayer with favour, *ver.* 5.

Vid. Serarium in Jos. 6 quæst. 50. Pined. de Rebus Solom. lib. 7. cap. 4. & 6

In the Prayer we have these particulars.

1. His abasement of himself, his shame, and consternation of spirit, a temper essential to true humiliation: *I will remember my Covenant* saith the Lord, and *thou shalt remember thy ways*, and be ashamed, *Ezek.* 16. 60, 61. and again, *you shall loath your selves in your own sight, for all your evils that ye have committed*, *Ezek.* 20. 43.

Jer. 3. 5. 31. 19. Dan. 9. 7, 8. Luke 18. 13.

2. A generall confession of their sinnes, and the

ὡς δ' ὅτε χεί-
μαῤῥοι ποταμοὶ
κατ' ὄρεσφι
ῥέοντες.
ἐς μισγάγκειαν συμβάλλετον
ὄβριμον ὕδωρ.
Homer. Iliad. 4.

sinnes of their Fathers, as *Nehem.* 9. 34. *Dan.* 9. 8. the greatnes, the growth, the continuance of them, *Our iniquities are increased over our heads*, as *Psal.* 38. 4. A Metaphor from the swelling of waters, *Psal.* 124. 4, 5. our Trespasses are *grown up to Heaven*, a further and stronger expression of the atrocity of them, as 2 *Chron.* 28. 9.

3. An acknowledgement of the justice of God in the punishment of their iniquities, on Kings, Priests, and people, in captivity, poverty, and contempt, *ver.* 7. as *Psal.* 44. 9-14. 79. 1-4.

4. A thankful acknowledgement of restored mercies out of free and rich grace, unto a *small remnant* of distressed Bondmen whom God *had not forsaken in their Bondage*, but extended mercy unto, who were, 1. escaped out of their captivity. 2. Settled in their own land, *as a naile in a sure place*, as *Isa.* 22. 23. 3. Comforted after their darkness and sorrow, *by lightning their eyes*, who had been long in *Babylon* as in a *Dungeon*, *Zach.* 9. 11. by *reviving* and giving them a resurrection, who had lien in Captivity as *dry bones in a grave*, *Ezek.* 37. 12. 4. Aided and assisted by the special favour of the King of *Persia*, to set up the House of God, and *repair the desolations thereof*, *ver.* 9. 5. Compassed about with his protection, as with *a wall*, from the violence of Enemies, *ver.* 8, 9. as *Isa.* 26. 1. *Zach.* 2. 5. by all which considerations, the greatness of their sinnes was exceedingly aggravated.

5. A particular confession of the present sin under the guilt whereof they did now lye.

Wherein are considerable. 1. A pathetical acknow-

acknowledgement that they are wholly without excuse put to silence, for guilt stops the mouth, *Matt.* 22. 12. *Rom.* 3. 19. *ver.* 10.

2. A full aggravation of it by several considerations. 1. It was against a severe *Law* provided in that very case, *Deut.* 7. 3, 4. 2. Against the *Equity* of that Law, the *people were unclean, abominable.* 3. Against the *Promise* annexed to the Law, *to eat the good of the Land.* 4. Against the *Chastening* hand of God which had been upon them. 5. Against the *Measure* of those Chastisements, they were punished *less then their iniquities deserved.* 6. Against the great and notable *Deliverance* which God had wrought for them beyond their thoughts or hopes, *ver.* 11, 12, 13.

6. An implicite owning of the wrath of God, which might in this case justly consume and make an end of them, and leave them no *remnant*, *ver.* 14.

7. An acknowledgement of Gods gracious fidelity in not consuming them, but patiently bearing with them, and letting them *remain escaped*, *ver.* 15.

Lastly, the conclusion of the Prayer, the same with the introduction into it, *shame* and *confession* of guilt, *ver.* 15.

O Lord God of Israel] who art in *Covenant* with them, and owness them for thy people, *Deut.* 26. 18. and art *afflicted in their afflictions*, in whose sufferings thy great name is concerned, in whose prosperity thy sole grace is magnified. *Thou art righteous*] just in thy *Judgements* in all that is come upon

on us, *Nehem*, 9. 33. faithfull in thy *Covenant* in all that thou hast said unto us. And hereof thou hast given us assurance, *for we remain yet escaped*;] According to thy promise, that after *seventy years* should be accomplished in *Babylon*, thou wouldst visit thy people, and perform thy good word towards them, in causing them to return to their own Land again, *Jer.* 29. 10. 2 *Chron.* 36. 21. we have deserved by our Provocations, to be *cut off* from being a People, but for thy Promise sake we *yet remain*, for thou hast said, that the *Scepter shall not depart from* Judah, *nor a Law-giver from between his feet, until* Shilo *come*, *Gen.* 49. 10. that *Immanuel* was to come of the house of *David*, before the Jews should cease to be a Nation, or should have their politie utterly dissolved, *Isa.* 7. 14. *Isa.* 8. 9, 10. *Isai.* 10. 24-27. We have deserved to have been kept *Captives* in *Babylon* still, but for thy Promise sake we remain *yet escaped*, because thou hast said, that thou wouldest cause us *to come up out of our graves, and bring us into the Land of Israel*, *Ezek.* 37. 12, 13, 14. It is *by the blood of the Covenant* alone that thou hast *sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit*, *Zach.* 9. 11.

The words are the close of a Penitential Prayer, wherein there is observable, 1. A Comfortable address to God as the *God of Israel*. 2. A Penitent acknowledgement of *his righteousnesse* in the evils which they suffered. 3. A grateful acknowledgement of his *fidelity* in the Mercies which they enjoyed. 4. A demonstration of this great Mercy. 1. *we remain*, we are not consumed. 2. We re-

remain an escape, we are not detained in captivity.

3. As it is their duty, not only escaped, but favoured, encouraged, assisted, to build Gods House, to restore his Worship, though to this day we have had so great provocations.

O Lord God of Israel, Thou art righteous, we have sinned as a perfidious people against a God in covenant, thou hast afflicted us in measure, as a God in covenant. Afflictions are sweetned, Mercies are magnified, sinnes are aggravated, sinners are humbled and melted by no consideration more, then by the grace of the Covenant, that we have to do with a God who is pleased to be called ours; when he smites us, this is our Comfort, the rod is in the hand of a Father, he may visit with stripes, but he *will not break his Covenant*, Psal. 89. 32-34. when he loadeth us with *mercies*, this is our joy, that they are all appendices to Christ, and rayes, and Emanations of the Covenant, Rom. 8. 32. Jer. 32. 41. If he *hear* us, if he *answer* us, if he be gracious unto us, *we shall weep no more, though he give us bread of adversity, and water of affliction*, Isai. 30. 18-20. when we *review our sinnes*, and set our selves seriously to turn to God, this makes us loath our selves, this fills our faces with shame, and our hearts with sorrow, that we have done it *against a God in Covenant*, who is *pacified* towards us, Ezek. 16. 62, 63. It is great presumption for *aliens* and *strangers* to despise Gods *authority*, or abuse his *bounty*, but for an *adopted* people, whom he hath selected in a peculiar manner to be his own, and *set apart for himself*, for whom he reserveth the choisest of his mercies,

cies, to whom he revealeth the secrets of his love, for these to sinne, not only against *Precepts* and *Benefits*, but against the *Bowels* of a Father, the *blood* of a Saviour, the *grace* of a Comforter, the *Covenant* of life, the Charter of Salvation, this is that which should greatly abase us in our own eyes, that we should *thus requite a Father*, Deut. 32. 6. The Lord calls Heaven and Earth to be amazed at it, *Hear O Heaven, and give ear O Earth, for the Lord hath spoken, for I have nourished and brought up children*, adopted them into my family, brought them into my Land, advanced them unto my favour, vouchsafed my presence with them, set up my Name and glory among them, and yet *they have rebelled against me*, Isa. 1. 2. *Be astonished O ye heavens*, and be ye horribly afraid, be very desolate, for my people who have heard my voice out of Heaven, whom I have taken from the midst of another Nation, by temptations, by signs, by wonders, by war, by a mighty hand, by a stretched-out arm, and by great terrors, who have been the Fountain of all their blessings, and the glory in the midst of them, *have changed their glory* for vanity, and their *Fountain* for *broken cisterns*, Jer. 2. 11, 12, 13. This is matter of great pressure unto him, Amos 2. 6, 13. and should much more be so unto us.

Many aggravations there are in the sins of Gods people, which may greatly tend to their humbling, and abatement. They are committed,

1. Against more glorious *light*, and more spiritual convictions, *after they have known God, and are known*

known of God, Gal. 4.9. after he hath taught them his ways, & shewed his covenant, & imparted unto them the secrets of his salvation, Ps. 25.9,14. after he had opened their ears, and sealed their instruction to withdraw them from sinful purposes, Job 33.16,17. after he had caused them to hear a word behind them, saying, this is the way, Isai. 30.21. and had shewed them the salvation of God, Psal. 50.23. and had been as it were transfigured in their presence. The more the beauties of holiness are discovered to the soul, the greater is the unkindness and disingenuity of that soul, in giving entertainment to any sinful lust again.

2. Against speciall and more tender love, which love of Christ passeth knowledge, and therefore should constrain us to love him, that loved us, & died for us, 2 Cor. 5.14. David had been highly honoured by God, Solomon was the beloved of God, and this made their sins both more strange, and more atrocious, 2 Sam. 12.7,8,9. Nehem. 13.26. you only have I known of all the Families of the Earth, therefore I will punish you for your iniquities, Amos 3.2. Jer. 2.21,22.

3. Against the breachings of the Spirit of Grace, whose motions being quenched, whose operations being resisted, whose sweet and gracious pulsations at the door of the soul being neglected, he is exceedingly grieved in the hearts of his people, and provoked to withdraw himself and his Comforts from them, Ephe. 4.30. Cant. 5.6. and they put to cry hard for recovery of him again, whom they had by their unkind usage grieved away, and caused to hide his presence from them, Psa. 51.10,11,12.

4. Against the *peace of God* which should *keep our hearts and mindes* in Christ, from yeilding to temptations, *Phil.* 4. 7. when the Lord speaks peace to the souls of his people, and lifts up the light of his Countenance upon them, and sheds abroad the love of his Son into them, this should fortifie and garrison the heart against the assaults of sinne, the *joy of the Lord* should be the *strength* of his people, *Nehem* 8. 10. and the more comfort they have in being acquainted with him, the more fearfull they should be of being estranged from him, the greater the *sweetnesse* of the *peace of God*, the greater the *bitternesse* of those sinnes whereby we forfeit it, and hide it from our selves.

5. Against that *spirituall wisdom and understanding*, which the Lord hath given us for this end, that we might *walk worthy of him unto all pleasing*, *Col.* 1. 9, 10. True wisdom is the knowledge of the most honourable and most excellent things whereby we discern things which differ, suggesteth the supreme and most necessary ends, and the most proper and pertinent *means* conducing thereunto. Setteth a man to consider how he may live to the great ufes for which he was made, is a *wisdom unto salvation*, 2 *Tim.* 3, 15. makes him look to *the way of life* how he may depart from Hell, *Prov.* 15. 24. 14, 8, 15. teacheth him *to walk circumspectly*, and warily amidst the many snares and temptations which are ready to seduce and mislead him, *Eph.* 5. 15. makes him have his *eyes in his head*, *Eccle.* 2. 14. that he may understand every good path, *Prov.* 2. 9. makes him study the will of God to the end that he

ἐπι στήμη τῶν τεμιωτάτων. *Arist.*

he may keep it, *Prov.* 28.7. puts the *heart* and the *right hand* together, *Eccle.* 10. 2. gives a spiritual evidence and taste of the beauties and sweetness of holiness: shews it self in *a good conversation*, and in doing the Commandements, *Jam.* 3.13. *Psal.* 111. 10. It is more improper for a holy man to yeeld up himself unto any way or work of wickedness, then for a Counsellor of State, or a great Philosopher to play with Straws or Cherry-stones, to give up himself to Boyish and Ludicrous vanities: and therefore holy men confess their sinnes in Scripture by the name of *folly*, 2 *Sam.* 24. 10. *Psalm* 73. 22.

6. Against the *hope of salvation*, which teacheth us *to purifie* our selves as Christ is pure, 1 *Joh.* 3. 3. our salvation will be to be *like unto Christ*, that grace which makes us suspire after a likeness unto him in *glory*, will kindle in our hearts a desire to be like unto him in *grace*, for grace is glory Inchoate, as glory is grace Consummate, so much as we neglect *duty*, so much we shake the *hope of glory*, Lord, saith the Psalmist, *I have hoped for thy salvation, I have done thy commandements*, *Psal.* 119.166. though obedience be not a *foundation* upon which to build our hope (for our hope must be in Gods word, not in our own works, *Psal.* 119.42. 49. 74.) Yet it is a *fruit*, and consequently an *Evidence* and argument *a posteriori* to demonstrate it.

The salvation we hope for is *to see God*, and hereunto is required *purity* of heart, *Matth.* 5. 8. as the object seen doth make its own image in the eye which seeth it; so when the soul *sees* God in

glory, it is perfectly fashioned unto his *likeness*, and therefore *without holiness no man can see God*, Heb. 12.14. So much as we blemish our *holiness*, we do obscure and fully our *hope*.

7. Against the *honour of Religion* which is thereby exceedingly wounded and reproached, 2 *Sam.* 12.14. the Apostle frequently exhorteth us to walk *worthy of our high calling*, so as *becometh the Gospel*, that we may *adorn the doctrine* of our Lord Jesus, and *put to silence the ignorance* of foolish men, that they may be ashamed who falsly accuse our good conversation, *ut nemo de nobis male loqui sine mendacio possit*: to be tender of the *name of God* and *his Doctrine*, that these may not be blasphemed, see *Ephes.* 4.1. *Phil.* 1.27. 1 *Thes.* 2.12. *Tit.* 2.10. 1 *Tim.* 6.1. 1 *Cor.* 6.5. 1 *Pet.* 2.15. 3.16. for though it be most illogicall and absurd to charge an holy Doctrine with the blame of those sins, which the professors thereof, contrary to the rules of their own profession, and in obedience only to their own lusts, do commit; Yet so much ignorance and malice there is in wicked men, as to blaspheme God for the sinnes of his people, and to reproach the rectitude of the rule for the obliquity of their lives, who swerve and vary from it. And by how much the greater ingratitude it is to be honoured by God as his servants are, and yet to dishonour him, by so much the more hainous are those sinnes, whereby we neither fear the God in our own hearts, and open the mouths of others to poure contempt upon him.

8. Against the *souls* of our brethren, which are thereby

Qui sibi malo vivendi licentiam indulgent, totidem suas Christianismi probra et macula. Calv. Opusc. de Scandalis. Magna insania est Evangelio non credere, cujus veritatem sanguis Martyrum clamat, prodigia probant, ratio confirmat, mundus testatur, Elementa loquuntur, daemones confitentur. Sed longe major Insania, Si de Evangelii veritate non dubitas, vivere tamen quasi de ejus falsitate non dubitares, Jo. Picus mirandula Epist.

thereby greatly scandalized, for as there is *joy in Heaven*, and consequently among the Saints on Earth (whose affections and conversations are heavenly) for the conversion of a sinner, and great mutual comfort in the communion of Saints, so inso-much that the joy of one is *the joy of all* the rest, 1 *Cor.* 12. 31. 2 *Cor.* 2. 3. So when a converted person relapseth into any sinne, it must needs sadden and offend the souls of all who rejoyced in his standing, and possibly become a stumbling block, and an occasion of falling unto them, as the Apostle shewe-eth, *Rom.* 15. 21. 1 *Cor.* 8. 10-13.

2. Against the *souls* of the *wicked*, who are thereby hardened and encouraged, *Ezek.* 16. 54. when wicked men, who possibly had some conflict and regret in their Consciences against those sinnes which their hearts hanker after, observe holy men overtaken with them, and indulge unto them, like *Rephaads* servants, they hastily catch at such an advantage, and are emboldened by their example unto sin, whose holy lives they neither love nor imitate. Therefore of all people, they who are called by Gods name, and have him for their God, should in special manner humble themselves before him for their sinnes, as sins whereby he is in special manner grieved and dishonoured, should above all others take heed of playing the wantons with divine grace; for though God be a tender and a loving Father, yet he may be an angry Father, and who *knoweth the power of his anger?* Psal. 90. 11. though thou be a Son, and an Heir of salvation, yet thou mayest be *Filius sub virga*, a son under

der displeasure, and when thou art so, thou wilt finde by sad experience, that *one frown* of his Brow, one stroke of his Rody hath infinitely more bitterness in it, then there is sweetness in the pleasures of a thousand sinnes. And since Gods own people do by their sins contribute unto publick Judgments, they should be the more carefull to stand in the breach, and to improve their interests in him for the procuring of renewed mercies, to minde him of his gracious Covenant, and of his Fatherly relation unto them, as the Church doth, *Psal.* 74. 20. forget not the Congregation of the poor, *have respect unto thy Covenant*, Thou, O Lord, art our Father, *we are thine*, *Isai.* 63. 16. 19. Be not wroth very sore, neither remember iniquity for ever, behold, see we beseech thee, *we are all thy people*, *Isa.* 64. 9.

Thou art righteous.] 1. In thy *Judgements* and chastisements which thou hast inflicted upon us, we cannot blame thy severity; thou didst warne us before thou didst punish us, thy *Trumpet* did sound before thy *Rod* did smite us.

2. Thou art a *Righteous Judge*, when thou *condemnest wicked men*, their mouth shall be stopped, thou wilt overcome when thou judgest, *Psal.* 51. 4. *Rom.* 3. 19. thou dost not wrong them, for they shall receive *according to their works*.

3. Thou art a *Righteous Father*; when thou *chastisest* holy men, thou dost not wrong them, thou measurest and proportionest thy stripes not unto their *sinnes*, but unto their *strength*, dealest with them tenderly, and suitably to their cases and conditions:

ditions: To *purge* them, not to consume them: thou hast a *Rod* for the *Cummin*, and a *Staffe* for the *Fitches*, and a *wheele* for the *Bread Corn*, *Isa.* 28. 27, 28. thy Rod is *Virga Hominum*, a Rod fitted to the condition of weak men, 2 *Sam.* 7. 14. and the Temptations wherewith thou suffereſt thy Children to be tempted, is πειρασμὸς ἀνθρώπινος, proportioned to the infirmities of man, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. thou knoweſt our *frame*, thou remembreſt that we are *duſt*, *Pſal.* 103. 14. that our ſtrength is not the ſtrength of *ſtones*, nor our fleſh of *braſſe*, that we dwell in houſes of *Clay* which are *cruſhed before the Moth*, *Job* 4. 19. 6. 12. and accordingly thou doſt in very faithfulneſs afflict, *to refine*, not to *conſume* us.

3. Yea when thy judgements are *ſecret*, yet they are *righteous*, when wicked men proſper, and good men ſuffer, when wicked men are the Fanne, and good men the Corn, when the Weeds flouriſh, and the Corn is overtopped, when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he, when the affairs of the world ſeem to be out of courſe, and every man out of his place; All this while the Lord makes way for the *revelation of his righteous judgements*: his work will be *beautifull in its time*: all things will *work together* for good, as Materials in a Building, Ingredients in a Cordial, Colours in a Table, *Rom.* 8. 28. The *proſperity* of the wicked will work to his *ruine*, *Prov.* 1. 3. the *affliction* of the righteous will work to his *glory*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. Thus *righteous in thy judgements*, neither thine Enemies, nor thy Children ſhall

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ever haue cause justly to complaine against thee.

Thou art righteous] 2. In thy *Covenant* and promises: If thou shouldest have dealt with us according to our provocations, we had been consumed, *Lam.* 3. 22. *Jer.* 10. 24. but thou hast remembred thy gracious *promise* to our fathers, and therefore we are preserved: Though our sins have forfeited mercy, yet thy truth and faithfulness hath fulfilled it: we owe not our *remaining*, that we are a *people*, we owe not our *escaping* that we are a *free people*, unto any goodness of our own, but unto the grace of the Covenant alone.

Gods truth and fidelity to his people that are in Covenant with him, is *the true ground of all their safety*, he doth not *change*, therefore we do not *perish*, who otherwise from the dayes of our Fathers are gone astray, *Mal.* 3. 6, 7. his mercies are *from everlasting to everlasting*, *Psal.* 103. 17. from everlasting in *predestination*, to everlasting in *Glorification*; he *gave grace*, and *promised eternal life before the world began*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Tit.* 1. 2. before they were extant, or had any being, (further then in the purpose of God,) on whom the grace was bestowed, to whom the life was promised. And what he did from eternity purpose, he will not in time revoke, for his *gifts are without repentance*, *Rom.* 11. 29. he doth by his *faith* and fear preserve his people through his *power*, unto that mercy which he hath from eternity given them, *Jer.* 32. 40. 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. of themselves they fall dangerously and frequently from their own stedfastness, and then

Ab æterno per prædestinationem, in æternum per glorificationem. Bernard Serm. 2. in Ascentione.

Ante mundi constitutionem vidit nos, fecit nos, Emendavit nos, misit ad nos, Redemit nos. Hoc ejus consilium manet in æternum. Aug. Ser. 2. in Psal. 32.

then the Lord doth chastise their wantonness with the Rod of a Father, but doth not utterly take away his loving kindness, *Psal.* 89. 28-35.

1. The Covenant and grace thereof is free and *absolute*, not conditional and suspended upon the unstable will of man: *It is not of him that willeth, or runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy*, and sheweth it on whom he will, *Rom.* 9. 15-18. Between God the Father indeed, and Christ as a second *Adam*, the Transaction of the Covenant was wholly *conditional*, he was to take from his Father a Commission in our nature, *to lay down his life, and to take it up again, to fulfill all righteousness*, to be made *sinne for us*, to have our iniquities and the *Chastisement of our peace laid upon him*, before he could see of the *travel of his soul*, Yea he undertook not only for his own work, but for *ours*, By the preciousness of his blood he *purchased*, and out of the plenitude of his Spirit he *suppleeth* unto us what ever grace is requisite unto our salvation. But I say as to us, the grace of the Covenant is thus fayre free and absolute, that no duties are required of us, which are not as Branches of the same Covenant bestowed upon us: he hath promised to give a *new heart*, and to put a *new Spirit* within us, to take away the *stony heart* out of our flesh, and to give us *an heart of flesh*, and to put *his Spirit* within us, and to cause us to walk in his Statutes, to save us from all our uncleanness, to cleanse us from all our iniquities, *Ezek.* 36. 25, 26, 27, 29, 33. and though he there tell us, that he will be *enquired of* by the house of Israel to doe these things for them, *ver.* 37. yet we

know it is he onely who poureth out the spirit of Grace and supplication, whereby we make this inquiry of him, *Zach.* 12. 10. *Gal.* 4. 6. *Rom.* 8. 26. True indeed it is, that when we believe, it is we only that believe, and when we work, it is we that work, but our working is not the cause of his grace, but his grace the cause of our working: *Certum est nos velle & facere cum volumus cum facimus sed ille facit ut velimus ut faciamus*: And therefore the Apostle saith *I laboured* more abundantly they they all, to note, that the *labour* was his, yet *not I, but the grace of God* which was with me, to note, that the *principle* was Gods, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. *Thou hast wrought all our works in us* saith the Prophet, *Isai.* 26. 12. The *works* are ours, the *strength* is thine: ours the *heart* and the *hand* that act, thine the *Spirit* and *grace* whereby we act. He doth not with-hold his love till our wills prevent him, and move him to extend it, but he doth out of his own free love frame our hearts unto the love of him, and work the will in us, which he requireth of us, *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. we repent because he turns us: he doth not turn to us, because we first turn to him: his love prevents ours and doth not stay for it, 1 *John* 4. 19. *Ezek.* 36. 32. *Isai.* 48. 9, 11. *Inspirat charitatem ut quæ discendo nouimus diligendo faciamus.*

Aug. de Grat. & Lib. Arbit. cap. 16.

Ipse Auctor, ipse Remunerator operis, ipse Remuneratio sua. Bernard in Psal. 91. *Ser.* 9.

Ille facit ut nos faciamus quæ præcepit, nos non facimus ut ille faciat quæ promisit Aug. Ep 143.

2. The Covenant and the grace thereof is *immutable*, and therefore changeth not with the unstable will of man: *God is not a man that he should lie, neither the Son of man that he should repent, hath he said, and shall he not doe it? hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?* *Numb.* 23. 19. his Covenant of grace

Vid. Bradward. de causa Dei lib. 1. *cap.* 33. 34. 35.

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confirmed by an *oath*, to shew the *immutability* of it: *This is as the waters of Noah unto me*, saith the Lord, *for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth: so have I sworn that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.* For the Mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed: but my kindness shall not depart from thee: *Neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed*, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee, *Isai.* 54. 9, 10. A Covenant thus founded upon mere *mercy*, and sealed by an *Oath*, is more unmovable then hills, or Mountains, the strong foundations of the Earth shall be sooner shaken then the *Oath* of God miscarry. The oath of God is the strongest demonstration of the immutability of his Counsel that can possibly be used, *Heb.* 6. 17. for where he sweares he doth not repent, *Psal.* 110. 4. Every work of mercy which he begins, he carries on to a consummation, *Phil.* 1. 6. the foundation of God remaineth sure, cannot be infringed, shaken or undermined by the levity or inconstancy of the will of man, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. whatever are the fluctuations of the heart of man, the Counsel of the Lord shall stand, *Prov.* 19. 21. *Psal.* 33. 10, 11.

The Covenant and grace thereof is most *powerfull* and *efficacious*. Therefore his Mercies are sure, his *promises yea and Amen*, because his word is setled in Heaven, seconded with his power, which will finde means to effect what ever he hath spoken, *God hath spoken once* saith the Psalmist, *twice have I heard this*, It is a word constant and stable, a word doubled to note the certainty of it (as *Joseph* said

Jurazione Dei firmata promissio. Aug. de Civ. dei. lib. 16. cap. 32.

said unto *Pharaoh*, *Gen.*41.32.) That power and mercy belong to God, *Psal.*62.11,12. every promise which *mercy* makes, *power* performs, if *mercy* promise an heart of flesh, and to put his fear into us, God hath *power* enough to make it good, hee may as soon be an impotent, as an unfaithfull God. *Abraham* considered not the impotency of his own body, but the *power of God* to make good his promise, and therefore *staggered not through unbelief*, *Rom.*4.19,20,21. and so the Apostle argues touching the conversion of the Jews, *Rom.*11.23. If they abide not still in unbelief, they shall be grafted in, for *God is able to graffe them in*, *Rom.*11.23.

4. The Covenant and grace thereof is *invincible* by any adverse assaults, nothing can alter or overrule the will of God, or cause him to recede from his own purposes of shewing mercy. If any thing could, *sinne* could: But he hath assured us that that shall not. *If his children forsake my Law, and walk not in my Judgements, if they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandements, then will I visit their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes; Nevertheless my loving kindnesse will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulnesse to fail, my Covenant will I not break, &c.* *Psal.*89.30.-34. though he punish, it shall be in *measure*; not unto rejection but unto emendation, *Isai.*27.8,9. As to the *guilt* of sinne, and damnation due unto it, he will pardon it, *I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sinne no more*, *Jer.*31.34. As to the *dominion* thereof, he will subdue it, and purge it away, *Micah*7.19,20. *Psal.*65.3. As to the particular *prevalency*

valency of any lust, he will awaken us to repent. Make us by some word, or affliction, or mercy, or example, or providence, to search and consider our wayes and return from all our evill doings, so he did *David* by the Ministery of *Nathan*, 2 *Sam.* 12. 13. so *Peter* by the look of *Christ*, *Luke* 22. 61. so *Josephs* brethren by his speaking roughly unto them, *Gen.* 42. 21. As to the *Remainders* of it, he will daily mortifie and destroy them, *Ro.* 6. 6. since then shall not break out so far as to annull and to evacuate the Covenant: For who then should be saved? seeing in many things we offend all, and by the grace of the Covenant alone are preserved from offending more. Nay the Lord is so gracious to his people, that their very *sins*, which of themselves do only defile and endanger them, are by Gods goodness ordered unto their benefit. The Lord could keep his servants from falling, *Jude ver.* 24. and preserve them blameless. 1 *Thes.* 5. 23. but he is pleased sometimes to leave them, that they may know themselves, and their own weakness, as he did *Hezekiah*, 2 *Chron.* 32. 31. that they may *lemoan* their own misery, and loath themselves in their own eyes, *Jer.* 31. 18, 19. *Ezek.* 20. 43. that they may be driven to *live upon free grace* and pardoning mercy, *Psal.* 51. 1. that they may set the *higher price* upon the *Lord Jesus*, who is a Sanctuary for the chief of sinners to fly unto, *Isai.* 8. 14. 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. that they may be the more *watchfull* over their loose and deceitfull hearts, having once, yea twice been betrayed by them, *Job* 40. 5. 34. 32. that they may *pray more earnestly* for the subduing and mortifying of prevalent

Adeo Justis omnia Cooperantur in Bonum ut etiam si qui ecrum deviant & exorbitant, etiam hoc ipsum eis faciat proficere in bonum, quia Humiliores redeunt atque doctiores. Aug. de Corrept. & Grat. cap. 6. vid. de nat. & Grat. 28. An vero ei peccata ipsa non Cooperantur in Bonum qui ex eis humilior, fervention, solicitior, timoratior & Cautior invenitur? Bern. Ser. 1. de diversis.

prevalent corruptions, *Psal.* 51. 7-10. *Rom.* 7. 23. these and other the like ways, the Lord hath ad-der the very *sins* of his people unto their good. And if *sinne* shall not prevaile against the covenant, we are sure nothing else shall: he that pardoneth sin rebuketh Satan, conquereth the world, his love is above the reach of any thing to separate us from it. *Rom.* 8. 33-39. none shall be able to take us out of Christs or his Fathers hands, *Joh.* 10. 28-30.

5. The Covenant and grace thereof is *founded* in the *blood of Christ* and ratified by it: as he hath by his blood purchased his people, *Tit.* 2. 14. so hath he by the same procured for them *all good things* specified in the Covenant, *Rom.* 8. 32. the blood of Christ can as well be vacated, as any branch of the the Covenant be unfulfilled to believers, for whom they were all bought with so precious a price.

6. His purchase is seconded by his *intercession*: His intercession is *the petition of his blood*, and therefore shall undoubtedly be granted, his Father *heareth him always*, *John* 11. 41, 42. and he prayeth to his Father that his people may be so *kept*, as that they may be with him, and *behold his glory*, *Joh.* 17. 11. 15. 24. therefore accordingly they shall be kept.

Vid. Camero. de Eccles. pag. 120.-126. in 4to.

7. Christs Intercession is seconded with his *Fathers love* to his people; I say not that I will pray the Father for you, for *the Father himself loveth you*, saith Christ, *John* 16. 26, 27. and therefore must needs be exceeding acceptable, because Gods own

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heart is towards them, and his love upon them, as the woman of Tekoa her petition for *Absolom* was easily granted by *David*, because his heart was towards him before, 2 *Sam.* 13. 39. and 14. 1, 2.

Lastly, the Lord hath promised his holy Spirit of Fear, Love, Grace, Adoption unto his people, by the help of which they are preserved from the dangers whereunto of themselves they are exposed, *Ezek.* 36. 27. *Isai.* 59. 21. upon these and such like grounds it appeareth; That because God is *righteous* and *faithfull* in his Covenant, therefore we *remain escaped.*

And if it be here objected that the Promises are usually set forth as conditionall, *The Lord is with you while ye be with him, and if ye seek him he will be found of you, but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you,* 2 *Chron.* 15. 2. *If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the Land, Isai.* 1. 19. *He that believeth shall be saved, Mark* 16. 16. *Joh.* 3. 16. *except ye repent ye shall perish, Luke* 13. 3.

We answer, 1. Promises are in some places made *absolutely*, which in others are *conditionally* expressed; as *Heb.* 13. *I will not leave thee nor forsake thee, Ier.* 32. 39. *I will give them one heart and one way*, that they may fear me for ever, *I will give them an heart to know me, they shall be my people, I will be their God, they shall return unto me with their whole heart, Ier.* 24. 7. If ye will obey my voice and keep my Covenant, is a *Condition* in one place, *Exod.* 19. 5. a *free promise* in another, *ye shall keep my judgements and doe them, Ezek.* 36. 27. *The mercy of the Lord is towards them that fear him, Psal.* 103. 11. There

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the fear of God is a condition, I will give them one heart and one way *that they may fear me*, Jer. 32. 39. there it is *a free promise*.

2. The Lord doth not only give us good things under a condition, but doth *give the condition* it self to his people, compare *Isa.* 1. 19. with *Phil.* 2. 12. *Acts* 10. 43. with *Phil.* 1. 29. *Ephes.* 2. 8.

3. Precepts and Conditions are used as the *means* of the grace promised. Of our selves we can do nothing of those duties unto which *Promises* are annexed, for *all our sufficiency is of God*, who *worketh all our works for us*, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. But the Precepts of the Word are the usual Instruments, by which he worketh those things in us, which he requireth of us, *Rom.* 10. 17.

4. Conditionall Propositions do not imply, that our performances work upon God to do what he had said, as if the performance of *duty* were only ours, and then the performance of *promise* alone his: But they intimate *the order* and *connexion* which the Lord hath set amongst his own gifts, some whereof he hath appointed to be *antecedent dispositions* and preparations towards others consequent upon them: *He that believeth shall be saved*, this is *a conditional promise*, Faith the condition, Salvation the Promise; But we may not so understand it as if Faith were only ours, and Salvation alone his. But *Faith* is one Gift of God, Antecedent to *Salvation* which is another Gift of God.

Use 1. Now then since the Lord is righteous in all the wayes of his Judgements and secret providences,

we must for ever lay our Hand on our Mouth, and put our Mouthes in the Dust, and beware of Murmuring and Repining against him; as if his wayes were not equall towards us: Behold *he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will say unto him, what dost thou? Iob 9. 12.* we may in our Prayers *plead* with God about his Judgements as Holy men have, Jer. 12. 1. *Habak.* 1. 2-4-13. But we may not *quarrell* at them nor *murmure* against them.

2. When the Lord doth strangely vary his Providences towards a people, and worketh unusuall changes and alterations among them: stirreth up some helpes, and then layeth them by, calleth forth others and quickly revokerh them, fitteth men for great actions, and in the midst of those actions cutteth them off; Our work here is not to censure either the Agent, or the Instruments, to charge the dealings of God either as unrighteous or as unreasonable; but to reflect upon our selves, and learn our *unstedfastnesse* in Gods Covenant, by his *diversifying of Providences* towards us. 1. Sometimes we over dote upon Instruments, and deifie them, as if God had no way to help us but one. And then God breaks that staffe when we lean too hard upon it, to force us to *leane upon his Name* again. 2. Sometimes we undervalue them, and will not understand that God is doing us good by them, (as it is said of *Moses*, *Acts* 7. 25.) and then God suspendeth his work which he was about to doe. 3. Sometimes the hearts of the people are unprepared for mercies, and then God

doth not honour his Instruments with seeing them. *Jehoshaphat* was a good King, yet he did not work a perfect Reformation, the high places were not taken away, and this the reason, *the people had not as yet prepared their hearts unto the God of their Fathers*, 2 *Chron.* 20. 32, 33. 4. Sometimes the guilt of old sinnes do remain uncleansed away, as it is said of the iniquity of *Baal-Peor*, *Iosh.* 22. 17. and in this case Instruments are too weak to divert wrath, 2 *Reg.* 23. 25, 26. Never such a Reformation as *Iosiah* made about the eighteenth year of his reign, and yet because the people returned *but fainedly*, *Ier.* 3. 10. within a few years after they were carried into Captivity. Our Saviour was very near his *Sufferings* when they cryed *Hosanna* before him. The Sun often shews biggest, and shines brightest, when it is ready to set; The Candle blazeth most when it is in the Socket; Many times dying men, and it may be so with dying Churches, have a lightning before death.

I speak not this to bode ill unto the Land of my nativity. If any say it shall not be so, but we shall still have Peace, and Truth, and Holiness flourish, I will chearfully say as the Prophet did, *Ier.* 28. 6. Amen: the Lord do so for this Land: But withall, happy is the man that feareth always, *Prov.* 28. 14. The sins of the people may weaken the hands of the best Instruments, and make them unable to help us. It is noted as a cause of wickedness that men have *no changes*, *Psal.* 55. 19. *Ier.* 48. 11. But to be rifled and emptied, and exercised with frequent alterations, and our seed to abide in us still, wan-

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ron under Mercies, sullen under Judgements, after all our Philick to relapse, after all that is come upon us, *again to break the Commandements*, this is a sad Symptome, a great aggravation of our sin, and justification of Gods Righteousnes in all his dealings with us.

Again, since the Lord is the God of his people, and righteous to them in a way of mercy and fidelity, We learn to acknowledge it a great Mercy, and to glorifie God for it, that we *Remaine yet escaped*: that we may set up an *Eben-Ezer*, and say thus far hath the Lord holpen us.

Many Considerations may set on the sense of this Mercy upon our hearts. 1. The many sinnes which remain amongst us, even in the Israel of God: sad divisions, sharp animosities, perverse Opinions, vanity, luxury, severe censurings, loose walking, worldly mindednes, &c. 2. The many *shakings*, and univerlal sufferings, whereby the Lord hath made it appear that his quarrel was against all orders of men, that the disease was all over, *Isai.* 1. 6. *Ier.* 5. 1-5. so that none can blame others, but every one acknowledge *the plague of his own heart*, and say as *David* did, *I confesse my sinne, and the sin of my people*, *Dan.* 9. 20. Now various shakings and concussions in a Nation use to be fore presages of greater Judgements, as we may see in Gods dealing with the ten Tribes before their dissolution. What shakings have been amongst us, we need not *recount*, by changes at home, by differences abroad, shakings on the Land, and shakings on the Sea, shakings at hand, and shaking afar off,

shakings by War, and shakings by sicknesses; shakings in our minds by divided Opinions, shakings in our hearts by divided affections, shakings in our estates by divided interests. And whether these shakings have a tendency to dissolution we know not; (we are not ignorant of the rage which hath been upon many of our Protestant Brethren in other parts of Christendom) But surely this consideration may lead us both to glorifie God that we *Remain yet escaped*, and to humble our selves under the feare of his further wrath.

3. The powerful *breathing* which hath been in the Land which where it doth not kindly work, where it is not honourably entertained, doth exceedingly ripen Judgements, and make white for the sickle. It is compared to the shining of the Sun, *2 Cor.* 4. 6. *2 Pet.* 1. 19. and to showers of rain, *Deut.* 32. which are intended for the bringing forth of Salvation, and springing up of Righteousnes, *Isai.* 45. 8. But if they fall upon sins, doe hasten their maturity, and make them *nigh unto cursing*, *Heb.* 6. 7, 8. the sins of the *Church* are *Summer Fruits*, they ripen faster then the sinnes of the *world*, the sins of the *Amorites* were four hundred years a ripening, *Gen.* 15. 16. the sins of Israel in the Wildernes fourty years, *Psal.* 95. 10. Gods patience towards the ten Tribes after their revolt was but two hundred and sixty years; from the sins of *Manasseh* to the Captivity brought upon Judah for those sins, little more then one hundred years. Asa and Jehoiada the sounding of the Trumpet seven times did lead in the falling of the wall; so

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the long sounding of the Word in the ears of disobedient people, is a threwd presage of ensuing ruine.

These considerations laid together, as should they justly awaken us to Humiliation, so are they Evidences of Gods goodness towards us; in that such a people *Remain yet escaped*. Escaped from the bondage of Popery, from the flames of persecution, from the *Spanish Armado*, from the vault of Powder, from rigour in the Church, from troubles in the State, from the terrour of a bloody War, from renewed attempts of trouble and danger, escaped from a Vote, extinguishing and abolishing the whole maintenance of the Ministery, the consequences whereof could not but have been inexpressably miserable. Any one of these evils God might have sharpned into a destruction. And yet after all this, *Righteous art thou, O Lord, for we remain yet escaped.*

2. It reproveth our unbelief, in consulting with flesh and blood, betaking our selves to carnall shifts in time of danger, having a *faithfull Covenant*, and a *righteous God* to lay hold upon, whose alone fidelity is the ground of his peoples safety, *who knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations*, 2 Pet. 2. 9. this was the sin of *Ahaz* in sending to the Assyrian to help him, when God offered him a sign to confirm his trust in him, *Isai.* 7. 11, 12. 2 *Chron.* 28. 19. The Christians in the Church of *Corinth*, being afraid to displease their Heathen friends, and endanger themselves, would sit with them at the Idols Table, and eat at their Tables meat offered

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to Idols. The Apostle disswadeth them from using this Carnal shift to decline danger, bids them *flee from Idolatry*, lest that which they in carnal wisdom might judge the means of their standing, should prove the occasion of their fall, and directeth them to trust for safety in a faithfull God, who would not suffer them to be tempted above that they were able, but would with the temptation make a way to escape, that they might be able to bear it, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13, 14.

3. In fears therefore and dangers we should be incouraged by these two Arguments; 1. The *Righteousness of God*. 2. Our own present *remaining escaped Faith* in, and *experience* of the fidelity of God to help us, to trust in him at all times; not to fear the wrath of man, but to secure the love of God, he sometimes purposely bringeth his servants to difficulties, that they may make tryal of such a friend, who in six and seven troubles is at hand to deliver them. Faith is *a venturous* grace, it honours God and layes hold on his strength, *Rom.* 4. 20. *Heb.* 11. 33. It is *a victorious* grace, and rises up above difficulties, 1 *Joh.* 5. 4. all things are possible to it. Therefore in times of danger let us plead Gods Covenant, and our own experience. Lord wilt thou now destroy us seeing we *remain yet escaped*, and are Monuments of thy Mercy? hast thou wrought so great deliverances, and done so many wonders, and snatcht us as brands out of the fire, to destroy us at the last? thou hast delivered, and dost deliver, wilt thou not give us leave to trust in thee for deliverance still? Though the

Lord

Lord had broken us in the place of Dragons, and had cast us off and put us to shame; yet even so we may lean upon his Name, and plead his Covenant, Psal. 44. 17, 19. Isai. 74. 1-20. Isai. 64. 8-12. Hab. 3. 17, 18. how much more comfortably may we plead it, when by the alone mercy thereof, we are safe escaped? When we may say as the people of Israel did, Josh. 17. 14. we are a great people, and the Lord hath hitherto blessed us? and may set up a Monument as Samuel did, 1 Sam. 7. 12. and say, thus far hath the Lord holpen us? This is one chief Argument which Gods servants use in Prayer, to mind him of his Word and Covenant, wherein he had caused them to hope, so Jacob, I am not worthy of the least mercy, but thou saidst, I will do thee good, Gen. 32. 9-12. so Moses, we remain yet escaped out of the Land of Egypt, thou hast brought us out thence, turn from thy fierce wrath, Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel thy servants, to whom thou swarest, &c. Exod. 32. 11-13. and again, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken; pardon the iniquity of thy people, as thou hast forgiven them from Egypt until now; As they remain yet escaped, so save them still, the same Mercy and Power can do it now which did it before, Numb. 14. 17, 19. so David, Thou hast spoken of thy servants house, for thy words sake hast thou done these great things: and now O Lord establish thy word, do as thou hast said, 2 Sam. 7. 19, 21, 25, 27, 29. So Solomon, Let thy word be verified which thou spakest unto thy servant David, 1 Kings 8. 26. So Asa, O Lord we rest in thee, thou art our God, 2 Chron. 14. 11. so Je-

shaphat, Thou art God—our eyes are upon thee, 2 *Chr.* 20.6-12. no such plea in Prayer as the free grace, the Word, the Truth, the Fidelity, the Righteousness of God.

Ut totum Deo detur, Hominis voluntatem bonam & præparat adjuvandam & adjuvat præparatam. Aug Enchirid. cap. 32. Si Deus misereatur etiam volumus ad eandem quippe Gratiam pertinet ut velimus Ad Simplicium Qu. 2. & Epist. 106.

4. This may comfort us against all the mutability of our own wills, whereby we are apt to start aside like a deceitfull Bow; In as much as our safety dependeth not upon our own performances, but upon the Covenant of God, who is righteous and faithfull, and will not suffer our weakness to annul his promise, *Rom.* 9.16.

5. This Caution notwithstanding we must take in, That we beware of playing the wantons with the grace of Gods Covenant, because thereby we remain escaped; for the Lord will not pass by the petulancy and lasciviency of any of his Children, though he doth not totally cast them off, yet he hath sharp rods wherewith he can chastise them. If they fly from his service, he can send a Whale to swallow them, and can bring all his Waves and Billows upon them; if they keep not to his Commission, he can send a Lion to tear them, he can make them feel the weight of his *Frown*, though they do not of his *Fury*, and it may be; cause them to walk in darkness, drooping, and disconsolate all their days, complaining of *broken Bones*, and of a *wounded Spirit*, with strong cryes, imploring the comforts of that Spirit, which they had so unkindly grieved and resisted.

As it is this day] escaped, escaped *this day* in which we lie under so sore and heavy a guilt. This is a marvellous heighning of Gods Mercy,

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That we may remain escaped in *this day*, a day of so great sin, and also a marvellous aggravation of the sin, that it hath been committed in *this day*, a day of so great Mercy, wherein we *remain yet escaped*. *Sinne* committed *in a day of mercy*; is the more exceeding *hainous*: *mercy* extended *in a day of sin*, is the more exceeding *glorious*. That we should so greatly provoke the Lord, *this day*, wherein we *remain escaped*: O how prodigious and presumptuous the wickedness? That we should remain escaped *this day*, wherein we have so greatly provoked the Lord, O how admirable and unsearchable the goodness?

1. Sinne in a day of great *Mercy* is exceedingly the more hainous. It is a great aggravation of sinne, when it withstandeth *Judgements*; when the Lord changeth the corrections, and men still hold fast their sins, *Amos* 4.6-12. and *turn not unto him that smiteth them*, *Isai.* 9.13. It is a brand upon *Ahaz* that *in the day of his distresse he sinned more*, 2 *Chron.* 28.22. How much more hainous is it to abuse *Mercy* and Loving kindness? It is the character of a wicked man, that *though favour be shewed him, yet he will not learn righteousness*, *Isai.* 26.10. The Angell spared *Balaam*, and yet he ran greedily after the *wages of iniquity*, *Numb.* 22.35. This is an unkindness the Lord often upbraideth his people with, *Deut.* 32.13-15. *Jer.* 2.2. 21. *Hos.* 13.5. *Amos* 2.9-13. This made *Solomons* sin the greater, that he turned from the God of Israel, who *had appeared to him twice*, 1 *King.* 11.9. This adds disingenuity, unthankfulness, unkindness unto disobedi-

once, when men neither fear, nor love the Lord for his goodness: No sinners more dangerous then those which are upon sweet things, no diseases more desperate, then those which reject Cordials; no Fruits ripen faster, then those on which the Sun continually shineth: as the Apostle saith of grace, where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, so we may by an inversion say of sin, where grace aboundeth, there the guilt of sin is the more abundant.

2. *Mercy* extended *in a day of sinne*, is the more exceeding glorious, when the Lord is pleased to proclaim mercy to a divorced people, *Jer.* 3.12-15. in the midst of provoked *wrath to remember mercy*, *Hab.* 3.2. and when men *go on frowardly* in their own ways, then *to heal them*, to restore comfort to them, to create peace, *Isai.* 57.17-19. *to heal a backsliding people*, and to love them freely, *Hos.* 14.14. To look back upon a denying *Peter*, *Luke* 22.61. To send a pardon to an adulterous *David*, 2 *Sam.* 12.13. To call from Heaven to a persecuting *Saul*, *Acts* 9.4. This is that which maketh Mercy the more radiant, which magnifieth the freeness, fulness, and superabundance of it, that it rejoyceth against judgment, *Jam.* 2.13.

These considerations tend much to *humble a people* which *remain yet escaped*, as we do this day.

The said conjunctions of our sins with the Lords goodness, when the Lord saith, *I will remember my Covenant*, and *thou shalt remember thy wayes*, Then he saith, *thou shalt be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified*

cified towards thee, Ezek. 16.60-63. When we compare his Mercy with our corrupt doings, then is a time to loath our selves in our own sight, *Ezek.* 20.42-44. 36.25-32. Sin *punished*, doth many times harden a sinner in pride, as we see in *Pharaoh*. But sin *pardoned*, and subdued with Mercy, should melt the soul into a godly sorrow, holy revenge, and self displicency for it: They shall *shall fear the Lord and his goodness* in the latter dayes.

O let us learn to bewail our wickedness, in that we have ventured on it in a day of Mercy, as if we had been delivered to commit abominations, *Jer.*7. 10. as if priviledges were a protection to profaneness. Certainly if mercies be aggravations of sin, no Nation in the world is less excusable then we. What Nation in the Earth hath God so honoured with a long possession of his Oracles, and glorious light of his Word? In so much that other Nations study the *English* Tongue to read our Books; What Nation hath ever had such manifold, such miraculous deliverances? What Nation hath the Lord Crowned with a greater abundance of all good things? What means could be used to work upon a people which the Lord hath not made use of amongst us? If teaching would work upon us, we have had his *word*; If Chastisements would amend us, we have had his *Sword*. If *bounty* would perswade us, we have been fed, and cloathed, and healed, and crowned, and compassed with mercies more then we can recount. If strange and unparalleld *Providences* would awaken us, this Nation hath never had for many hundred years such a

prospects of Gods works, such interwoven mixtures of Mercies, of Judgements, of Wonders, of Terrors. Great Instruments raised up, and taken away again, Wars raging, and again ceasing, Seas roaring, and again calmed. And certainly the Works of the Lord should be sought out of his people, *Psal*, 111. 2. and improved to their own accompt. Felt Judgements should mak them out of love with sin: Renewed mercies should make them in love with God. That which humbleth should heal them, that which comforts should cure them, that which amazeth, should amend them.

2. This is a strong Argument in Prayer for penitent sinners to use, that God hath mercy in store even in a day of sin for his people: that though we have trespassed against God, yet *there is hope in Israel concerning this thing*, *Ezra* 10.2. That though sin do ever *forfeit* mercy, yet it doth not ever *remove* it; though it do always *provoke* wrath, yet it doth not always *procure* it; how will mercy triumph in a day of repentance, when so great provocations have not hitherto extinguished it? how will fire break forth in dry wood, when it hath prevailed against the green? needs must that Jewel be glorious in the Sun, which glisters in the Night. This should exceedingly encourage us unto Repentance. Doth the Lord invite backsliding Israel, doth he wait to be gracious to a secure people, doth he pitty us in our blood, and are his bowels kindled towards us, when we compass him about with lies and deceit? doth he look back with pitty upon a a denying *Peter*? doth he speak pardon from Hea-

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ven unto a perſecuting *Paul*? doth he ſhew mercy on a *Manaſſeh*, filling *Jeruſalem* with blood and Idols? doth he appear firſt unto *Mary Magdalen*, out of whom he he had caſt ſeven Devils? O who would not be encouraged by ſuch examples, to fly for ſanctuary from the wrath to come, unto that mercy which hath ſnatched theſe as brands out of the fire? The Lord keeps as open houſe for us as for them, *Iſa.* 55.1. *Rev.* 22.17. his mercy as abundant for any other penitents as for them, *Iſa.* 55. 6, 7,8. his call and invitation the ſame to us as to them, *Joh.* 7.37,38. The blood of Chriſt as effectuall for us as for them, 1 *Ioh.* 2.2. They were ſet forth *as examples to all that ſhould after believe in him unto eternal life*, 1 *Tim.* 1.16.

Only let us beware of profaning this comfort by perſiſting in our ſins: But follow the example of theſe penitents here, though their ſin had not removed Gods mercy, yet Gods mercy did remove their ſin. They entred into a *Covenant*, *ſware* to the Lord, gave their *hands* that they would *put away their ſtrange wives*, and *ſeparate themſelves from the people of the Land*, *Ezra* 10. 3, 11, 12, 19. This is a Genuine work of true *hope* in mercy, when it makes us *purifie our ſelves* 1 *Ioh.* 3. 3. no man can hope for glory, who is an enemy to Grace, for glory is grace perfected, and we can hope for nothing which we hate, he that hates Grace, doth not love Glory.

3. We note that in ſolemn Humiliations there is a great Emphaſis in theſe words, *As it is this day*, It is a circumſtance greatly conſiderable, The *time* wherein we have ſinned and eſcaped, *Time* greatly

greatly aggravates *ſin*, *Exod.* 8. 32. *Luke* 19. 42. *Time* greatly commends *Mercy*, that God kept touch with his people to a very day, *Exod.* 12. 41, 42. Therefore we ſhould learn wiſdome to improve *time* unto duty, as it is ſaid of the Children of *Iſſachar*, that *they had underſtanding of the times to know what Iſrael ought to do*, 1 *Chron.* 12. 32. Who knoweth ſaid *Mordecai* to *Eſter*, whether thou be come to the Kingdom *for ſuch a time as this*, *Eſter* 4. 14. Let us therefore wiſely conſider the condition of the times which God hath brought upon us. Times of great and univerſal ſickneſs and infirmity, after he had not many moneths ſince upon Prayer, removed ſuch diſtempers in good part: ſurely his anger is not turned away, his hand is ſtretched out ſtill, becauſe we have not unfeignedly turned unto him that ſmiteth us.

2. Times of wonderfull changes and unſetledneſs, many preparations and attempts to heal the breaches amongſt us, and many abortions and miſcarriages in thoſe attempts, Honourable perſons raiſed up by God to ſerve the Intereſts of the Nations, and by his Providence laid down again. And when the Lord had by his providence raiſed up this eminent Inſtrument, now gone to him, by whoſe great Wiſdom, accurate intelligence, indefatigable vigilancy, and ſpecial care, we might probably have ſuppoſed that by degrees things would have wrought unto a compoſedneſs, and ſettlement in the midſt of great Actions and great Succeſſes, he likewiſe is ſuddenly taken away. It is good to ſtudy the meaning of God in theſe things. 1. That

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we ſnould bewail our *carnall confidence*, and learn to look up and to truſt more in Him, and leſs in man. 2. To labour for *hearts eſtabliſhed by his grace*, that we may the more comfortably look for an outward eſtabliſhment in order and peace, for our ſettlement muſt begin in our hearts, ſo long as our hearts are unſteadfaſt with God, his dealings may be ſtill in fluctuation and uncertainty towards us. 3. To acknowledge notwithſtanding theſe ſad changes and concuſſions, this great Mercy, *That we remain yet eſcaped*, that the Lord hath not yet ſaid unto us that he would caſt us off, hath not expoſed us to thoſe flames and commotions which our ſins have deſerved, but that yet we ſit under our Vines and Fig-trees, and none make us afraid.

Laſtly, to caſt Anchor on the Rock of Ages, and keep cloſe to the Throne of Gace, to ſecure his love and care of us, his preſence and Throne amongſt us, who never dies, in whom there is *everlaſting ſtrength*, to get firm holdfaſt of thoſe Comforts which have nothing of Mortality, nothing of Lubricity in them, which will ſtay with us while we remain here to ſweeten all the paſſages of our Pilgrimage, and accompany us unto the preſence of the Lord, in whoſe preſence there is fulneſſe of Joy, and at whoſe Right Hand there are pleaſures for ever more.

FINIS.